

THE
PERSONAL HISTORY, ADVENTURES,
EXPERIENCE, & OBSERVATION

OF
DAVID
COPPERFIELD



OF BLUNDERSTONE ROOKERY.

(Which He never meant to be Published on any Account.)

BY CHARLES DICKENS.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY H. K. BROWNE.

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AGENTS :—J. MENZIES, EDINBURGH ; T. MURRAY, GLASGOW ; J. M'GLASHAN, DUBLIN.

THE NICOLL, REGENT STREET, AND 22, CORNHILL, LONDON.

BESIDES the above Patented Article of Dress (called THE NICOLL), there is another Novelty introduced for this Season, which is, however, Registered under the name of NICOLL'S MORNING COAT, it being especially intended for morning wear, in riding or walking exercise, when it necessarily avoids the stiff formality to be observed in the cut and form of the dress-coat. The price is TWO GUINEAS.



The premises (extending from 114 to 120, Regent Street), as illuminated in honour of Her Majesty's and the Prince's Birthdays.

THE REGISTERED PALETOT is now ready for the Spring Months, with all the new and patented improvements, included in the moderate price of Two GUINEAS. Thus it deservedly bears the name of being not only the most fashionable, but also the cheapest and most durable garment ever offered to the public; the intrinsic value of the material known as NICOLLIAN, or LLAMA CLOTH, being, within the last few months, much enhanced; the same durability being retained, with an increased fineness and beauty in appearance. It can be seen, ready for immediate wear, in every size, at the Patentees' Warerooms.

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OR
22, CORNHILL, FACING ROYAL EXCHANGE.**

TO OLD NEPTUNE.

COME, Father Neptune! I'm disposed to be
A little chatty, for a certain reason:
Thou knowest well, as monarch of the sea,
That this is what I'll term "a ducking season,"
When multitudes of Britain's sons and daughters
Recruit their health and strength beside thy waters.

Thou hast, of course, observ'd an extra stir,
When riding, with thy Triton, o'er the ocean;
Nor do I question, venerable Sir!
Thy secret pleasure at the glad commotion.
This season cannot fail to be exciting;—
But that is not the object of my writing.

I want to ask what thy opinion is
Of Mosses' Mart, so famed in this dominion?
I know thou art a tolerable quizz,
Well capable of forming an opinion:
Thou'st seen what Messrs. Mosses have been at, Sir,
And, therefore, hast thy notion, this or that, Sir.

Ah! Neptune! I can see from that broad smile,
The high opinion thou hast formed of Mosses';
Whose quality of cloth, and make, and style,
Are such as rivalry in vain opposes—
Whose dress is worn by throngs that show their faces,
In annual visits, at thy watering-places.

Father of ocean! Mosses' worth appears
In matchless dress on many a summer roamer;
Dress never equal'd in preceding years,
Since thou wast sung by Virgil or by Homer.
With this assertion my production closes;—
One word for thee, and six times one for Mosses'.

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TAILORS, WOOLLEN DRAPERS, CLOTHIERS, HATTERS, HOSIERS, FURRIERS,
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ALL COMMUNICATING WITH EACH OTHER, AND FORMING ONE VAST ESTABLISHMENT.

CAUTION.—E MOSES & SON regret having to guard the public against imposition, but having heard that the untradesmanlike falsehood of being connected with them, or it is the same concern, has been resorted to in many instances, and for obvious reasons, they beg to state they have no connexion with any other House in or out of London, except their branch Establishments, 36, Fargate, Sheffield, and 19, Thornton's Buildings, Bradford, Yorkshire; and those who desire genuine and cheap Clothing, &c., should call at or send to Minories and Aldgate, City, London; or to the Branch Establishments as above.

TAKE NOTICE.—This Establishment is closed from sunset Friday, till sunset Saturday, when business is resumed till 12 o'clock.

and most useful for the purpose of preserving life from shipwreck; but, unfortunately, each and all require that degree of preparation which in moments of frantic terror is never thought of. Their schemes are excellent in their way, but they are not of universal application. No, the desideratum is to be found in some other means, simple, natural, and forcible, and self-suggestive when once pointed out. We believe it at once apparent, in the invention, manufacture, or adaptation of a preparation of cork, called the Patent Stuffing—cork separated by Machine into shreds—*fibre*—applicable to anything, everything, assuring safety in every article on board a ship, whose specific gravity is lighter than water—to hammocks, bedding, cushions, bolsters; in the pockets of trousers, in caps, hats, vests, great coats; in bonnets, ay, and ‘bustles’—even an umbrella or parasol—ought to be so filled as to possess in itself the means of saving the owner or possessor. It has been tested by experiment, proved by high authority; and will, we are persuaded, be adopted ere long by Act of Parliament. Had any of the bedding, or bolsters, cushions of boats or seats, of the ill-fated *Avenger* steam frigates been stuffed with this material, or country would not have mourned the loss of 240 brave and gallant officers and seamen; had the furniture of the *Forth* packet been fitted with this cork stuffing, a vast amount of agony of feeling would have been spared; had Her Majesty’s ship *Mutine* been supplied with it, we are assured that not a single man of the crew would have perished.

“In a word, for defence in war, or for preservation of life in shipwreck—and, in fact, for all the purposes of humanity, it has been invented and manufactured, and it must work its way.”—*United Service Gazette*, 10th March, 1849.

ADVANTAGES OF THE PATENT CORK FIBRE IN BOATING.—We copy from that portion of the columns of the *Times* devoted to the records of mortality, the following melancholy paragraph:—

“Drowned on Saturday afternoon, caused by the upsetting of a boat on the River Lea, at Upper Clapton, Mr. J. J. R—, and Mr. T. C. H—, Students at Bartholomew Hospital.

“It is precisely in the case of such sudden accidents as these that the cork fibre best displays its value. Had the boat in which these unhappy young men took their recreation been provided with a seat supplied with the cork fibre, there can be no reasonable doubt that the parents and friends of these young men would not now have had to mourn their irreparable bereavement. It is lessons of this sort which teach us the criminality of supineness in not adopting immediate precautions against fatal accidents, which are at the command of every one. We have already bestowed some notice on one most important quality of cork, when applied to the purpose of saving life at sea; we now devote a few lines to the task of showing that cork may be made available on land, if not for saving life, at least for mitigating some of its petty tortures and annoyances. We learn from very good authority, good we say, because from the testimony of those who have in their own persons experienced the fact that in cases of rheumatism, thin sheets of cork placed next the skin have an almost magical effect in procuring relief to the sufferer. We can easily understand how this should be so: cork not only shields the skin from these sudden atmospheric changes, so dreaded by the afflicted, but it also excites a salutary action which is thus able to employ its whole force in expelling the rheumatic pains. This is a matter, we think, well worthy of medico-scientific investigation, and we shall be glad to find that some skilful and impartial mind has made this matter the subject of study. We also understand that the cork fibre used for bedding, bolsters, and pillows, has sanatory properties of a very high character. The miasmata arising from infectious disease is not absorbed or retained by the cork substances the same as in the case of the ordinary kinds of bedding, and this, therefore, renders it most suitable for all large buildings, where many individuals sleep under the same roof, such as hospitals, union workhouses, barracks, and police stations. There is another quality which must not be overlooked,—the cork fibre neither sustains nor harbours insect life,—an invaluable piece of information to those who desire undisturbed rest in the dog days.”—*Railway Gazette*, 17th March, 1849.

THE LOSS OF EMIGRANT SHIPS.—“In calling the attention of our readers to the loss—if not frequent, yet too frequent—of passenger and emigrant ships, we are sensible of the inexpediency of alarming timid minds with a vivid representation of dangers which must be encountered. If the contemplation of danger can do nothing in the way of enabling us to evade it, it may then be well to close our eyes to its existence.

“There well—we then had blithely laugh’d,
Till gulphing seas had whelmed us o’er.”—

but, the way to be prepared for danger, is to look it boldly in the face. We have never chanced to sail or steam in a passenger vessel without occupying ourselves with a somewhat serious comparison of the number of passengers on board, with the accommodation afforded by the boats in the event of a mishap. We have frequently heard remarks from fellow passengers, indicating that their thoughts were occupied with the same calculation. Those unsightly things above the paddle-wheels of sea-going steamers, are in the nature of a tribute to the public apprehensiveness on this point, but though good so far as they go, they afford but a trifling amount of additional security. EVERY PASSENGER VESSEL OUGHT TO CARRY THE MEANS OF KEEPING ITS WHOLE COMPLEMENT OF PASSENGERS, TOGETHER WITH ITS CREW, ABOVE WATER FOR A TIME, IN CASE OF ACCIDENT.

“The first and most obvious requisite would be, that every person should possess at least so much knowledge of the art of swimming as would enable him to sustain himself on the water for a short time, and would secure to him presence of mind to avail himself of the facilities for safety which might be afforded.

“Suppose then each passenger sufficiently collected to provide for himself, when the hour of danger arrives, then follows the duty of the owners of steam vessels to provide appliances for keeping those who so readily trust their lives in their hands, on the surface of the water, until succour may arrive. The avidity with which in those awful hours everything that will float is seized upon, suggests at once the value of a provision of well-conceived life-buoys. Every moveable in the ship should be invested with the greatest possible amount of sustaining power. Much ingenuity has been applied to this object, and not without considerable effect.

“A Hackney Coach is licensed to carry four passengers. We might consent to a tax upon steam-vessels, to ensure a similar adaptation of the number of passengers to the capacity of the vessel, attended with an efficient inspection to ensure attention to the regulation. How easy it would be to append to such a system a provision that, for each passenger, according to the number for which the vessel was licensed, it should carry, SAY A CORK FLOATING MATTRESS. These mattresses, from the ingenious manipulation which the cork undergoes, form comfortable beds, and would therefore cause no addition to the ordinary provision for the passengers’ accommodation, and take no extra room for stowage.”—*The Emigrant*, 31st March, 1849.

how many could be saved in company, provided several of these mattresses were together converted into a raft. Among the experiments before Sir Gordon Bremer and a select party at the Woolwich Dockyard, was that of lashing six of the mattresses together with boat oars, a process almost instantly effected. This raft was thrown into the dock, and Captain Stevens, the swimming master at the Royal Baths, jumped on it, and floated about the dock, quite at his ease. His son (of course an expert swimmer) performed the feat of an accidental fall overboard. The captain, on his raft, made his way instantly to the spot, pulled his son on it, and landed him again, amid general applause, in the vessel. This was done without depressing the raft perceptibly in the water. The quality which belongs exclusively to this kind of raft is, that it can sustain no injury from coming in violent collision with any part of the wreck, or from grounding upon rock. The buoyancy of the cork remains unaffected, however much the exterior coverings may be damaged. A BOLSTER, 34lbs. WEIGHT, was next thrown overboard, and Captain Stevens's son placed himself upon it, and showed that EVEN THIS SMALL HELP WAS PERFECTLY CAPABLE OF SUSTAINING HIS WEIGHT IN THE WATER FOR AN UNLIMITED SPACE OF TIME. A BOAT-CUSHION, OF THE SAME WEIGHT, WAS FOUND TO BE QUITE AS EFFICIENT. A single mattress, 13lb. in weight, the ordinary size of a seaman's bed, was then thrown into the water; Captain Stevens, a heavy man, sat, lay at length, and rolled about on it, quite at his ease, being supported entirely out of the water. The indestructible buoyancy of the Patent Cork Stuffing may be said to be now incontestably established. Its applicability, in every emergency, is also beyond question. Humanity and interest, seldom found in connection, here jointly combine to demand its adoption, not only by the ship-owners, but by the government. We hope shortly to be able to give some explanation of the many other important sanitary purposes to which this singular substance can be adapted."

Morning Herald, 6th March, 1489.

THE LATE APPALLING LOSS OF LIFE ON BOARD THE EMIGRANT SHIP FLORIDIAN.—THE PATENT CORK FIBRE.—"Unfortunately for humanity, but fortunately for the humane object we had in view last week, in drawing attention to the extraordinary properties cork fibre possesses of affording instant assistance in cases of shipwreck, we have to point to one of the most terrible sacrifices of human life which have recently come under our notice. An emigrant ship, crammed with human beings from the age of infancy to manhood, is driven by stress of weather on a sand-bank, in sight of our own coasts, in sight of other vessels, and in a few unavailing prayers and shrieks for help are hurried into eternity. Can it for a moment be doubted, had this ill-fated vessel been fitted up in that mode which, last week, we proved the cork fibre could best display its life-sustaining and buoyant properties, namely, used as ordinary stuffing for the mattresses, the cushions, the seats in common use on board, that the efficient and immediate aid which these instantaneous life-preservers would have afforded, would in all human probability have proved the means of rescuing scores from the awful and unprepared fate, which suddenly overtook them. In the name of humanity, we are entitled to demand that no more time be lost before this cork fibre, or something of equal buoyancy and indestructibility, and capable of similar adaptation, if it is possible to find such another material (which we doubt), be immediately made the ready instrument of assisting to save life in case of shipwreck, so that we may no more have our feelings harrowed from reading details like those furnished by the Floridian catastrophe, with the knowledge in our minds that a simple substance such as the cork fibre could have rendered effectual aid, had it been at hand, as it ought to have been."—*Railway Gazette*.

PRESERVATION OF LIFE FROM SHIPWRECK.—PATENT CORK STUFFING.—"We have frequently had occasion to notice various inventions from time to time brought before the public for the purpose of saving life in case of shipwreck, and other accidents arising from 'the perils of the deep'; but we have certainly met with none which appears to be so effective as the means lately adopted of *threading cork*, and *applying it to the stuffing* of mattresses, bolsters, cushions, and other portions of furniture used in a ship's fitting. The great buoyancy of cork is too well known to require comment—the only objection hitherto raised against its adoption as a life preserver has been its bulk, and consequent inconvenience, but its utility for the purpose above mentioned having been thoroughly tested, the previous objections are entirely obviated. In fitting a vessel with furniture composed as much as possible of cork, the buoyant body thrown upon the water, in a case of wreck, would be very great; and, consequently, the chance of escape to the persons on board would be increased in an equal, if not greater, ratio."—*Shipping Gazette*.

SHIPWRECKS AND THE MEANS OF PRESERVING LIFE.—"The catalogue of the numerous wrecks, and the particulars of the awful loss of human life, which have appeared in the daily journals during the last ten days, would almost fill the eight pages of our *Gazette*. The loss of the West India mail packet *Forth* has been more than confirmed, by startling details from officers and passengers; happily, the destruction of property is the only circumstance to be regretted. On the coast of Scotland, about a score of poor fishermen have become victims to their perilous calling, and from the Welsh coast reports reach us daily of missing vessels and crews; but the harrowing tale of the week is the total loss of another emigrant ship on the Long Sands, coast of Essex—(the *Floridian*, bound to New York)—when, out of crew and passengers amounting to 174, no less than 170 perished, the only survivors in this dreadful catastrophe being three seamen and one passenger, who were saved by the *Peterel*, revenue cutter, and taken to Harwich. With these heart-rending details hourly before us—disasters in fine weather, as well as such awful accidents as happened to the *Floridian* in the stormy seasons of the year—we fear we become too indifferent to the calls of humanity, and callous to the sense of duty which ought to impel us, as Christians and Englishmen, to attempt at least, with the means which science, ingenuity, and experience have provided, to save the lives of our fellow-creatures. On shore we have life-boats without end, and we have stout hearts to man them, but they are unfortunately seldom or never at the point of danger, or at hand at the call of the helpless passenger or worn-out mariner. We insist upon all our shipping craft, royal or mercantile, being provided with well-found boats; but with the mere sustaining principles of flotation which are derived from the form, the structure, and the material of which they are composed, although adapted in fine weather to answer the purpose required of them, yet they are in constant danger of being swamped by over-crowding; and in rough weather how rarely do they ever come up to expectation. It is clear, then, that something beyond boats is required to preserve life, and to give an assurance of safety and that presence of mind so vital to the welfare of individuals as well as to crews. We want an auxiliary to boats—a last resource—a means of continuous sustentation in an element like water, which may recal, intuitively, the despairing wretch from the wild shriek of departing existence, to a sense of animation and hope, and confidence, that may induce him to prolong his struggles with the King of Terrors.

"It would be unjust to those philanthropic individuals who have spent their lives, as well as their fortunes, in the attempt to mature such an ever available support for the hour of danger, if we did not notice their laudable efforts. Captain Smith, R.N.; Mr. Holdsworth, of Dartmouth; Mr. Alfred Hely, inventor of the catamaran; and a score of other eminent projectors, have brought forward various contrivances and appliances most ingenious

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

CORK MATTRESSES FOR SHIPS.—"A number of experiments were last summer exhibited on the Thames and in the basin in Woolwich Dockyard, to prove the efficacy of an invention by which the lives of sailors and passengers in ships, &c. could, in the event of shipwreck, be saved. The invention, which was very simple, consisted in substituting cork cuttings or shreds in the place of horse hair, wool, or flock, as the stuffing for mattresses, pillows, &c., to be employed in ships and nautical craft of all kinds. The experiments were perfectly satisfactory, and were approved of by Sir G. Bremer and by many persons connected with the navy, and by several scientific men who witnessed them. The cork was cut into small vermicular shreds of various fineness, and by few pounds of this material were found to possess a most extraordinary buoyant power. The difficulty at that time was to procure the article so manufactured in such quantities as to render it generally serviceable; the instruments employed to cut the shreds, from the toughness of the cork, not possessing sufficient power, or being sufficiently adapted to cut large quantities, except by a very slow process. The consequence was, the invention did not become very generally known or used. Since that time machinery has been contrived, and is now at work on the premises of the patentees, at the City Saw Mills, Regent's-canal, by which the cork is cut with the greatest dispatch and facility, and can be furnished to any extent. *The recent lamentable loss of 170 lives on the coast of Essex would not have happened had the unfortunate vessel which was wrecked had mattresses of this material on board. The majority of the sufferers might probably have escaped by means of it.*"—*The Times*, 7th March, 1849.

PRESERVATION OF LIFE FROM SHIPWRECK.—PATENT CORK STUFFING.—"Our columns have again recorded one of those vast losses of human life, by the shipwreck of the 'Floridan,' emigrant ship, which have so often appalled the public, and which as often have been passed over without effort to prevent their recurrence or to lessen their effects. On land we have our inquests, public attention is enforced, and thence results a tendency to obviate the possibility of the same calamities. With disasters at sea it is otherwise. We practise the fatalism of the Turks, which we so easily condemn—our feelings soothe themselves by a few pathetic exclamations, and all is forgotten. In the unhappy case of the *Floridan*, the first boat capsized; the second was overfilled by a frantic rush of the passengers, and shared the same fate. So it always has been. The *Ocean Monarch* gave the same melancholy proof of the insufficiency of boats, in moderate weather, in sight of our shores, and in broad daylight. It is evident we must turn to something else—we must try a new plan: the old plans do nothing for us. We have endeavoured to recall all the new ideas we have heard on this subject. We find amongst them one which is not only a novel, but very ingenious application of a fact known to every schoolboy—one rationally entitled to attention, because it is founded on the experience of everybody. We learn to swim by cork; its indestructible buoyancy is known by all the world.

"On Saturday last we observed a very able article in an influential weekly contemporary, from which we extract the following:—

"In the early part of last year public attention was very generally directed to an invention for saving life and property at sea in cases of shipwreck or sudden calamity, which appeared at once so simple and efficacious as to lead to the belief that a mode at last had been discovered of avoiding or mitigating the unspeakable horrors of shipwreck. We allude to numerous experiments which took place before distinguished naval authorities and the public at large, on the *Serpentine*, at Woolwich Dock-yard, and at various sea-ports of the kingdom, to test the ability of *cork, shredded*, so as to adapt it for the ordinary stuffing of mattresses, bolsters, squabs, and the common furniture and bedding of a ship's company; to afford ready and, humanly speaking, certain means of saving the lives of passengers and crew, and possibly the cargo of a vessel, when threatened with destruction by storm and shipwreck. Those experiments were, in all cases, so eminently successful, and the approbation of the naval men so universally accorded; that it was fairly assumed that not only government, but the whole shipping interest, would lose no time in coming to an arrangement with the patentees for the application and adoption of such an invaluable invention in our magnificent navy and vast mercantile marine. We heard, with much satisfaction, that the Admiralty had made a beginning by ordering that one of the Arctic vessels sent in search of Sir J. Franklin, should be supplied with these patent life-preserving mattresses, and that more than one foreign government had sent orders to this country for a quantity of the same articles, with the avowed purpose, if found to answer the end for which they were invented, of introducing them generally into their war ships and their commercial marine. For some months, however, we lost sight of this sound and hopeful projects had shelved it for a while, or that the production of the material was too costly to difficulties of a purely mechanical nature, which, after much time, large expense and scientific labour, have been thoroughly overcome. We need hardly say that cork is not a very manageable substance. To produce it in shredded, of various length of staple and fineness—if we may use these terms—it is essential to have very ingenious and complicated machinery. It is no detriment to any popular invention whatever, to say, that it found that the machinery first constructed for the purpose of shredding the cork was defective in certain essential qualities, that it could not produce the material in quantity sufficient to meet the extensive orders which came pouring in as soon as the importance and efficacy of the life-preserving mattresses were known, and further, that the quantity produced was, of necessity, at an enhanced cost, not contemplated by the patentees, and any fibre—to use a familiar illustration, from the size of a macaroni to vermicelli—can be produced with adaptation to its purpose is beyond all question. Let us just remind the reader of one or two results attained at some of the public experiments. It has already been stated that one of the great and important uses of the bedding, the cushions of the seats and benches in ships or pleasure boats, provided with this patent stuffing, become in an instant, in case of need, so many life preservers. Each sailor, officer, or passenger, is furnished with an instantaneous means, if not of saving life in all cases, yet of sustaining life in the vast majority of cases until assistance from other sources arrives or can be obtained. Now, the problem to be solved by these experiments was, what quantity of the stuffing, either in a mattress or a squab, would suffice to sustain a single person in the water, and

BY HER MAJESTY'S ROYAL LETTERS PATENT.

THE PATENT

CORK FLOATING MATTRESS & BOAT CUSHION,

FOR

THE PRESERVATION OF LIFE ON THE WATER.

THE FLOATING QUALITY, or buoyancy, of CORK is known by every body; it is needless to speak about it in a Circular. The application of that quality in an available form at sea has never yet been achieved, and several years of the Patentee's life have been spent in seeking the successful solution of that problem.

Mattresses and Bolsters, Sofa-cushions, and Squabs, all articles of indispensable necessity in the cabin, when stuffed with CORK FIBRE, in lieu of the ordinary material, BECOME LIFE-PRESERVERS in the hour of danger, while they subserve all their usual purposes at other times.

The efficiency of these Life-preservers is indisputable, as they form ARTICLES OF DAILY USE, ARE ALWAYS AT HAND, and ready for service in the event of any calamity from accident, shipwreck, or fire, however sudden that calamity may be, and whether by night or day. Moreover, THEY TAKE NO ADDITIONAL SPACE.

The Mattresses and bedding do not depend upon a waterproof or any particular covering—nor upon the exclusion of water—nor upon inflation by air—THEIR BUOYANCY IS NOT IN THE SLIGHTEST DEGREE IMPAIRED BY SATURATION, LEAKAGE, PERFORATION, OR DAMAGE OF ANY DESCRIPTION; in fact, a Mattress torn in several pieces will still float.

Steam-boat and Ship-owners, Members of Yacht Clubs, Passengers, Emigrants, all must be interested in an invention which places human life beyond the risks incident to the sea.

The EMIGRANT'S BOLSTER is earnestly recommended to the notice of those whose means are too limited to purchase a mattress, as it is IMPOSSIBLE that loss of life can happen at sea from wreck or fire, if every Emigrant be provided with one of them.

The loss of life, which is constantly occurring on the rivers and lakes of England, from boat accidents, might be wholly prevented, by so simple an expedient as supplying all Boats afloat with Cushions stuffed with this Cork fibre.

But the advantages of the Cork Fibre are numerous for general application as stuffing:—

1st.—For cleanliness it is unsurpassed, as it affords no support for insect life.

2nd.—It is a non-conductor of heat, and therefore eminently adapted for Invalids.

3rd.—It is a non-absorbent. No moisture is retained, but all fluids instantly permeate.

4th.—For India, and the Tropics generally, it is invaluable. Every one familiar with tropical grievances place foremost amongst them the ravages of the Moth and other insects of the like destructive habits. Beds, Sofas, Mattresses, Stools, Saddles, Horse-Collars, Carriage-linings—all perish in a comparatively short period of time before these devastating vermin. Cork is a natural repellent of insect life, as the oils which promote its development and sustenance are absent.

5th.—Moreover, the best medical authorities agree that Cork possesses properties which are alike preventive and curative of certain affections to which the human frame is subject, such as rheumatism, cramp, &c. To any one acquainted with the customs peculiar to the Spanish Peninsula (the native soil of the Cork tree), the medical qualities of this bark are not unknown.

For all these reasons the Patent Cork Fibre is peculiarly adapted for the Mattresses of Barracks, Unions, Hospitals, Lunatic Asylums, Orphan Schools, and, indeed, for all Institutions where the first requisites are—health and cleanliness.

To officers under canvas in campaign, the Cork Fibre Mattress will be invaluable, as it will preserve them from the effects of sleeping upon damp bedding, to which they owe so much of their ill-health in after life.

The Floating Power of the Mattress in sustaining men in the water is daily exhibited at the Royal Polytechnic Institution, Regent Street; and at the Company's Works, it may be tried by any applicant in a basin appropriated to it, filled with tepid water.

Mattresses, Boat-Cushions, Emigrants' Bolsters, and all other manufactured articles, may be obtained of all respectable Upholsterers, Cabinet Makers, and Steam Boat Fitters.

The Fibre can only be had at the Company's Works, City Saw-Mills, Wenlock Basin, Regent's Canal, City Road.

THEO. SHEATH, SECRETARY.

CAUTION.—No person should lash himself on to the top of the Mattress in the event of Shipwreck, for, being the heavier body, the wash of the waves would probably turn him underneath, and the extraordinary buoyancy of the Cork would prevent him from righting himself again.

[Turn over.

"She tried to hold up after that; and many a time, when they told her she was thoughtless and light-hearted, made believe to be so; but it was all a bygone then. She never told her husband what she had told me—she was afraid of saying it to anybody else—till one night, a little more than a week before it happened, when she said to him: 'My dear, I think I am dying.'

"'It's off my mind now, Peggotty,' she told me, when I laid her in her bed that night. 'He will believe it more and more, poor fellow, every day for a few days to come; and then it will be past. I am very tired. If this is sleep, sit by me while I sleep: don't leave me. God bless both my children! God protect and keep my fatherless boy!'

"I never left her afterwards," said Peggotty. "She often talked to them two down stairs—for she loved them; she couldn't bear not to love any one who was about her—but when they went away from her bedside, she always turned to me, as if there was rest where Peggotty was, and never fell asleep in any other way.

"On the last night, in the evening, she kissed me, and said: 'If my baby should die too, Peggotty, please let them lay him in my arms, and bury us together.' (It was done; for the poor lamb lived but a day beyond her.) 'Let my dearest boy go with us to our resting-place,' she said, 'and tell him that his mother, when she lay here, blessed him not once, but a thousand times.'"

Another silence followed this, and another gentle beating on my hand.

"It was pretty far in the night," said Peggotty, "when she asked me for some drink; and when she had taken it, gave me such a patient smile, the dear!—so beautiful!—

"Daybreak had come, and the sun was rising, when she said to me, how kind and considerate Mr. Copperfield had always been to her, and how he had borne with her, and told her, when she doubted herself, that a loving heart was better and stronger than wisdom, and that he was a happy man in hers. 'Peggotty, my dear,' she said then, 'put me nearer to you,' for she was very weak. 'Lay your good arm underneath my neck,' she said, 'and turn me to you, for your face is going far off, and I want it to be near.' I put it as she asked; and oh Davy! the time had come when my first parting words to you were true—when she was glad to lay her poor head on her stupid cross old Peggotty's arm—and she died like a child that had gone to sleep!"

Thus ended Peggotty's narration. From the moment of my knowing of the death of my mother, the idea of her as she had been of late had vanished from me. I remembered her, from that instant, only as the young mother of my earliest impressions, who had been used to wind her bright curls round and round her finger, and to dance with me at twilight in the parlor. What Peggotty had told me now, was so far from bringing me back to the later period, that it rooted the earlier image in my mind. It may be curious, but it is true. In her death she winged her way back to her calm untroubled youth, and cancelled all the rest.

The mother who lay in the grave, was the mother of my infancy; the little creature in her arms, was myself, as I had once been, hushed for ever on her bosom.

When we go out to the door, the Bearers and their load are in the garden; and they move before us down the path, and past the elms, and through the gate, and into the church-yard where I have so often heard the birds sing on a summer morning.

We stand around the grave. The day seems different to me from every other day, and the light not of the same color—of a sadder color. Now there is a solemn hush, which we have brought from home with what is resting in the mould; and while we stand bare-headed, I hear the voice of the clergyman, sounding remote in the open air, and yet distinct and plain, saying: "I am the Resurrection and the Life, saith the Lord!" Then I hear sobs; and, standing apart among the lookers-on, I see that good and faithful servant, whom of all the people upon earth I love the best, and unto whom my childish heart is certain that the Lord will one day say: "Well done."

There are many faces that I know, among the little crowd; faces that I knew in church, when mine was always wondering there; faces that first saw my mother, when she came to the village in her youthful bloom. I do not mind them—I mind nothing but my grief—and yet I see and know them all; and even in the background, far away, see Minnie looking on, and her eye glancing on her sweetheart, who is near me.

It is over, and the earth is filled in, and we turn to come away. Before us stands our house, so pretty and unchanged, so linked in my mind with the young idea of what is gone, that all my sorrow has been nothing to the sorrow it calls forth. But they take me on; and Mr. Chillip talks to me; and when we get home, puts some water to my lips; and when I ask his leave to go up to my room, dismisses me with the gentleness of a woman.

All this, I say, is yesterday's event. Events of later date have floated from me to the shore where all forgotten things will reappear, but this stands like a high rock in the ocean.

I knew that Peggotty would come to me in my room. The Sabbath stillness of the time (the day was so like Sunday! I have forgotten that) was suited to us both. She sat down by my side upon my little bed; and holding my hand, and sometimes putting it to her lips, and sometimes smoothing it with hers, as she might have comforted my little brother, told me, in her way, all that she had to tell concerning what had happened.

"She was never well," said Peggotty, "for a long time. She was uncertain in her mind, and not happy. When her baby was born, I thought at first she would get better, but she was more delicate, and sunk a little every day. She used to like to sit alone before her baby came, and then she cried; but afterwards she used to sing to it—so soft, that I once thought, when I heard her, it was like a voice up in the air, that was rising away.

"I think she got to be more timid, and more frightened-like, of late; and that a hard word was like a blow to her. But she was always the same to me. She never changed to her foolish Peggotty, didn't my sweet girl."

Here Peggotty stopped, and softly beat upon my hand a little while.

"The last time that I saw her like her own old self, was the night when you came home, my dear. The day you went away, she said to me, 'I never shall see my pretty darling again. Something tells me so, that tells the truth, I know.'

This was all the consolation that her firmness administered to me. I do not doubt that she had a choice pleasure in exhibiting what she called her self-command, and her firmness, and her strength of mind, and her common sense, and the whole diabolical catalogue of her unamiable qualities, on such an occasion. She was particularly proud of her turn for business; and she showed it now in reducing everything to pen and ink, and being moved by nothing. All the rest of that day, and from morning to night afterwards, she sat at that desk; scratching composedly with a hard pen, speaking in the same imperturbable whisper to everybody; never relaxing a muscle of her face, or softening a tone of her voice, or appearing with an atom of her dress astray.

Her brother took a book sometimes, but never read it that I saw. He would open it and look at it as if he were reading, but would remain for a whole hour without turning the leaf, and then put it down and walk to and fro in the room. I used to sit with folded hands watching him, and counting his footsteps, hour after hour. He very seldom spoke to her, and never to me. He seemed to be the only restless thing, except the clocks, in the whole motionless house.

In these days before the funeral, I saw but little of Peggotty, except that, in passing up or down stairs, I always found her close to the room where my mother and her baby lay, and except that she came to me every night, and sat by my bed's head while I went to sleep. A day or two before the burial—I think it was a day or two before, but I am conscious of confusion in my mind about that heavy time, with nothing to mark its progress—she took me into the room. I only recollect that underneath some white covering on the bed, with a beautiful cleanliness and freshness all around it, there seemed to me to lie embodied the solemn stillness that was in the house; and that when she would have turned the cover gently back, I cried: "Oh no! oh no!" and held her hand.

If the funeral had been yesterday, I could not recollect it better. The very air of the best parlor, when I went in at the door, the bright condition of the fire, the shining of the wine in the decanters, the patterns of the glasses and plates, the faint sweet smell of cake, the odour of Miss Murdstone's dress, and our black clothes. Mr. Chillip is in the room, and comes to speak to me.

"And how is Master David?" he says, kindly.

I cannot tell him very well. I give him my hand, which he holds in his.

"Dear me!" says Mr. Chillip, meekly smiling, with something shining in his eye. "Our little friends grow up around us. They grow out of our knowledge, ma'am?"

This is to Miss Murdstone, who makes no reply.

"There is a great improvement here, ma'am?" says Mr. Chillip.

Miss Murdstone merely answers with a frown and a formal bend; Mr. Chillip, discomfited, goes into a corner, keeping me with him, and opens his mouth no more.

I remark this, because I remark everything that happens, not because I care about myself, or have done since I came home. And now the bell begins to sound, and Mr. Omer and another come to make us ready. As Peggotty was wont to tell me, long ago, the followers of my father to the same grave were made ready in the same room.

There are Mr. Murdstone, our neighbour Mr. Grayper, Mr. Chillip, and I.

she did upon her knees, humming a lively little tune the while. Joram, who I had no doubt was her lover, came in and stole a kiss from her while she was busy (he didn't appear to mind me, at all), and said her father was gone for the chaise, and he must make haste and get himself ready. Then he went out again; and then she put her thimble and scissors in her pocket, and stuck a needle threaded with black thread neatly in the bosom of her gown, and put on her outer clothing smartly, at a little glass behind the door, in which I saw the reflection of her pleased face.

All this I observed, sitting at the table in the corner with my head leaning on my hand, and my thoughts running on very different things. The chaise soon came round to the front of the shop, and the baskets being put in first, I was put in next, and those three followed. I remember it as a kind of half chaise-cart, half piano-forte van, painted of a sombre color, and drawn by a black horse with a long tail. There was plenty of room for us all.

I do not think I have ever experienced so strange a feeling in my life (I am wiser now, perhaps) as that of being with them, remembering how they had been employed, and seeing them enjoy the ride. I was not angry with them; I was more afraid of them, as if I were cast away among creatures with whom I had no community of nature. They were very cheerful. The old man sat in front to drive, and the two young people sat behind him, and whenever he spoke to them leaned forward, the one on one side of his chubby face and the other on the other, and made a great deal of him. They would have talked to me too, but I held back, and moped in my corner; scared by their love-making and hilarity, though it was far from boisterous, and almost wondering that no judgment came upon them for their hardness of heart.

So, when they stopped to bait the horse, and ate and drank and enjoyed themselves, I could touch nothing that they touched, but kept my fast unbroken. So, when we reached home, I dropped out of the chaise behind, as quickly as possible, that I might not be in their company before those solemn windows, looking blindly on me like closed eyes once bright. And oh, how little need I had had to think what would move me to tears when I came back—seeing the window of my mother's room, and next it that which, in the better time, was mine!

I was in Peggotty's arms before I got to the door, and she took me into the house. Her grief burst out when she first saw me; but she controuled it soon, and spoke in whispers, and walked softly, as if the dead could be disturbed. She had not been in bed, I found, for a long time. She sat up at night still, and watched. As long as her poor dear pretty was above the ground, she said, she would never desert her.

Mr. Murdstone took no heed of me when I went into the parlor where he was, but sat by the fireside, weeping silently, and pondering in his elbow-chair. Miss Murdstone, who was busy at her writing-desk, which was covered with letters and papers, gave me her cold finger-nails, and asked me, in an iron whisper, if I had been measured for my mourning.

I said: "Yes."

"And your shirts," said Miss Murdstone; "have you brought 'em home?"

"Yes, ma'am. I have brought home all my clothes."

"Have you, sir?"

"All your life," said Mr. Omer. "I may say before it. I knew your father before you. He was five foot nine and a half, and he lays in five and twenty foot of ground."

"RAT—tat-tat, RAT—tat-tat, RAT—tat-tat," across the yard.

"He lays in five and twenty foot of ground, if he lays in a fraction," said Mr. Omer, pleasantly. "It was either his request or her direction, I forget which."

"Do you know how my little brother is, sir?" I inquired.

Mr. Omer shook his head.

"RAT—tat-tat, RAT—tat-tat, RAT—tat-tat."

"He is in his mother's arms," said he.

"Oh, poor little fellow! Is he dead?"

"Don't mind it more than you can help," said Mr. Omer. "Yes. The baby's dead."

My wounds broke out afresh at this intelligence. I left the scarcely-tasted breakfast, and went and rested my head on another table in a corner of the little room, which Minnie hastily cleared, lest I should spot the mourning that was lying there with my tears. She was a pretty good-natured girl, and put my hair away from my eyes with a soft kind touch; but she was very cheerful at having nearly finished her work and being in good time, and was so different from me!

Presently the tune left off, and a good-looking young fellow came across the yard into the room. He had a hammer in his hand, and his mouth was full of little nails, which he was obliged to take out before he could speak.

"Well, Joram!" said Mr. Omer. "How do *you* get on?"

"All right," said Joram. "Done, sir."

Minnie colored a little, and the other two girls smiled at one another.

"What! you were at it by candle-light last night, when I was at the club, then? Were you?" said Mr. Omer, shutting up one eye.

"Yes," said Joram. "As you said we could make a little trip of it, and go over together, if it was done, Minnie and me—and you."

"Oh! I thought you were going to leave me out altogether," said Mr. Omer, laughing till he coughed.

"—As you was so good as to say that," resumed the young man, "why I turned to with a will, you see. Will you give me your opinion of it?"

"I will," said Mr. Omer, rising. "My dear;" and he stopped and turned to me; "would you like to see your——"

"No, father," Minnie interposed.

"I thought it might be agreeable, my dear," said Mr. Omer. "But perhaps you're right."

I can't say how I knew it was my dear, dear mother's coffin that they went to look at. I had never heard one making; I had never seen one that I know of: but it came into my mind what the noise was, while it was going on; and when the young man entered, I am sure I knew what he had been doing.

The work being now finished, the two girls, whose names I had not heard, brushed the shreds and threads from their dresses, and went into the shop to put that to rights, and wait for customers. Minnie stayed behind to fold up what they had made, and pack it in two baskets. This

quantity of black materials, which were heaped upon the table, and little bits and cuttings of which were littered all over the floor. There was a good fire in the room, and a breathless smell of warm black crape—I did not know what the smell was then, but I know now.

The three young women, who appeared to be very industrious and comfortable, raised their heads to look at me, and then went on with their work. Stitch, stitch, stitch. At the same time there came from a workshop across a little yard outside the window, a regular sound of hammering that kept a kind of tune: RAT—tat-tat, RAT—tat-tat, RAT—tat-tat, without any variation.

"Well!" said my conductor to one of the three young women. "How do you get on, Minnie?"

"We shall be ready by the trying-on time," she replied gaily, without looking up. "Don't you be afraid, father."

Mr. Omer took off his broad-brimmed hat, and sat down and panted. He was so fat that he was obliged to pant some time before he could say: "That's right."

"Father!" said Minnie, playfully. "What a porpoise you do grow!"

"Well, I don't know how it is, my dear," he replied, considering about it. "I *am* rather so."

"You are such a comfortable man, you see," said Minnie. "You take things so easy."

"No use taking 'em otherwise, my dear," said Mr. Omer.

"No, indeed," returned his daughter. "We are all pretty gay here, thank Heaven! Ain't we, father?"

"I hope so, my dear," said Mr. Omer. "As I have got my breath now, I think I'll measure this young scholar. Would you walk into the shop, Master Copperfield?"

I preceded Mr. Omer, in compliance with his request; and after showing me a roll of cloth which he said was extra super, and too good mourning for anything short of parents, he took my various dimensions, and put them down in a book. While he was recording them he called my attention to his stock in trade, and to certain fashions which he said had "just come up," and to certain other fashions which he said had "just gone out."

"And by that sort of thing we very often lose a little mint of money," said Mr. Omer. "But fashions are like human beings. They come in, nobody knows when, why, or how; and they go out, nobody knows when, why, or how. Everything is like life, in my opinion, if you look at it in that point of view."

I was too sorrowful to discuss the question, which would possibly have been beyond me under any circumstances; and Mr. Omer took me back into the parlor, breathing with some difficulty on the way.

He then called down a little break-neck range of steps behind a door: "Bring up that tea and bread-and-butter!" which, after some time, during which I sat looking about me and thinking, and listening to the stitching in the room and the tune that was being hammered across the yard, appeared on a tray, and turned out to be for me.

"I have been acquainted with you," said Mr. Omer, after watching me for some minutes, during which I had not made much impression on the breakfast, for the black things destroyed my appetite, "I have been acquainted with you a long time, my young friend."

She was very kind to me. She kept me there all day, and left me alone sometimes ; and I cried, and wore myself to sleep, and awoke and cried again. When I could cry no more, I began to think ; and then the oppression on my breast was heaviest, and my grief a dull pain that there was no ease for.

And yet my thoughts were idle ; not intent on the calamity that weighed upon my heart, but idly loitering near it. I thought of our house shut up and hushed. I thought of the little baby, who, Mrs. Creakle said, had been pining away for some time, and who, they believed, would die too. I thought of my father's grave in the churchyard, by our house, and of my mother lying there beneath the tree I knew so well. I stood upon a chair when I was left alone, and looked into the glass to see how red my eyes were, and how sorrowful my face. I considered, after some hours were gone, if my tears were really hard to flow now, as they seemed to be, what, in connexion with my loss, it would affect me most to think of when I drew near home—for I was going home to the funeral. I am sensible of having felt that a dignity attached to me among the rest of the boys, and that I was important in my affliction.

If ever child were stricken with sincere grief, I was. But I remember that this importance was a kind of satisfaction to me, when I walked in the playground that afternoon while the boys were in school. When I saw them glancing at me out of the windows, as they went up to their classes, I felt distinguished, and looked more melancholy, and walked slower. When school was over, and they came out and spoke to me, I felt it rather good in myself not to be proud to any of them, and to take exactly the same notice of them all, as before.

I was to go home next night ; not by the mail, but by the heavy night-coach, which was called the Farmer, and was principally used by country-people travelling short intermediate distances upon the road. We had no story-telling that evening, and Traddles insisted on lending me his pillow. I don't know what good he thought it would do me, for I had one of my own : but it was all he had to lend, poor fellow, except a sheet of letter-paper full of skeletons ; and that he gave me at parting, as a soother of my sorrows and a contribution to my peace of mind.

I left Salem House upon the morrow afternoon. I little thought then that I left it, never to return. We travelled very slowly all night, and did not get into Yarmouth before nine or ten o'clock in the morning. I looked out for Mr. Barkis, but he was not there ; and instead of him a fat, short-winded, merry-looking, little old man in black, with rusty little bunches of ribbons at the knees of his breeches, black stockings, and a broad-brimmed hat, came puffing up to the coach window, and said :

"Master Copperfield ?"

"Yes, sir."

"Will you come with me, young sir, if you please," he said, opening the door, "and I shall have the pleasure of taking you home."

I put my hand in his, wondering who he was, and we walked away to a shop in a narrow street, on which was written OMER, DRAPER, TAILOR, HABERDASHER, FUNERAL FURNISHER, &c. It was a close and stifling little shop ; full of all sorts of clothing, made and unmade, including one window full of beaver-hats and bonnets. We went into a little back-parlor behind the shop, where we found three young women at work on a

marked in my mind, seems to have swallowed up all lesser recollections, and to exist alone.

It is even difficult for me to believe that there was a gap of full two months between my return to Salem House and the arrival of that birthday. I can only understand that the fact was so, because I know it must have been so; otherwise I should feel convinced that there was no interval, and that the one occasion trod upon the other's heels.

How well I recollect the kind of day it was! I smell the fog that hung about the place; I see the hoar frost, ghostly, through it; I feel my rimy hair fall clammy on my cheek; I look along the dim perspective of the schoolroom, with a sputtering candle here and there to light up the foggy morning; and the breath of the boys wreathing and smoking in the raw cold as they blow upon their fingers, and tap their feet upon the floor.

It was after breakfast, and we had been summoned in from the playground, when Mr. Sharp entered and said:

"David Copperfield is to go into the parlor."

I expected a hamper from Peggotty, and brightened at the order. Some of the boys about me put in their claim not to be forgotten in the distribution of the good things, as I got out of my seat with great alacrity.

"Don't hurry, David," said Mr. Sharp. "There's time enough, my boy, don't hurry."

I might have been surprised by the feeling tone in which he spoke, if I had given it a thought; but I gave it none until afterwards. I hurried away to the parlor; and there I found Mr. Creakle sitting at his breakfast with the cane and a newspaper before him, and Mrs. Creakle with an opened letter in her hand. But no hamper.

"David Copperfield," said Mrs. Creakle, leading me to a sofa, and sitting down beside me. "I want to speak to you very particularly. I have something to tell you, my child."

Mr. Creakle, at whom of course I looked, shook his head without looking at me, and stopped up a sigh with a very large piece of buttered toast.

"You are too young to know how the world changes every day," said Mrs. Creakle, "and how the people in it pass away. But we all have to learn it, David; some of us when we are young, some of us when we are old, some of us at all times of our lives."

I looked at her earnestly.

"When you came away from home at the end of the vacation," said Mrs. Creakle, after a pause, "were they all well?" After another pause, "Was your mama well?"

I trembled without distinctly knowing why, and still looked at her earnestly, making no attempt to answer.

"Because," said she, "I grieve to tell you that I hear this morning your mama is very ill."

A mist arose between Mrs. Creakle and me, and her figure seemed to move in it for an instant. Then I felt the burning tears run down my face, and it was steady again.

"She is very dangerously ill," she added.

I knew all now.

"She is dead."

There was no need to tell me so. I had already broken out into a desolate cry, and felt an orphan in the wide world.

What meals I had in silence and embarrassment, always feeling that there were a knife and fork too many, and that mine; an appetite too many, and that mine; a plate and chair too many, and those mine; a somebody too many, and that I!

What evenings, when the candles came, and I was expected to employ myself, but, not daring to read an entertaining book, pored over some hard-headed, harder-hearted treatise on arithmetic; when the tables of weights and measures set themselves to tunes, as *Rule Britannia*, or *Away with Melancholy*; and wouldn't stand still to be learnt, but would go threading my grandmother's needle through my unfortunate head, in at one ear and out at the other!

What yawns and dozes I lapsed into, in spite of all my care; what starts I came out of concealed sleeps with; what answers I never got, to little observations that I rarely made; what a blank space I seemed, which everybody overlooked, and yet was in everybody's way; what a heavy relief it was to hear Miss Murdstone hail the first stroke of nine at night, and order me to bed!

Thus the holidays lagged away, until the morning came when Miss Murdstone said: "Here's the last day off!" and gave me the closing cup of tea of the vacation.

I was not sorry to go. I had lapsed into a stupid state; but I was recovering a little and looking forward to Steerforth, albeit Mr. Creakle loomed behind him. Again Mr. Barkis appeared at the gate, and again Miss Murdstone in her warning voice said: "Clara!" when my mother bent over me, to bid me farewell.

I kissed her, and my baby brother, and was very sorry then; but not sorry to go away, for the gulf between us was there, and the parting was there, every day. And it is not so much the embrace she gave me, that lives in my mind, though it was as fervent as could be, as what followed the embrace.

I was in the carrier's cart when I heard her calling to me. I looked out, and she stood at the garden-gate alone, holding her baby up in her arms for me to see. It was cold still weather; and not a hair of her head, or a fold of her dress, was stirred, as she looked intently at me, holding up her child.

So I lost her. So I saw her afterwards, in my sleep at school—a silent presence near my bed—looking at me with the same intent face—holding up her baby in her arms.

CHAPTER IX.

I HAVE A MEMORABLE BIRTHDAY.

I PASS over all that happened at school, until the anniversary of my birthday came round in March. Except that Steerforth was more to be admired than ever, I remember nothing. He was going away at the end of the half-year, if not sooner, and was more spirited and independent than before in my eyes, and therefore more engaging than before; but beyond this I remember nothing. The great remembrance by which that time is

and his eyes stiffly towards me, "to observe that you are of a sullen disposition. This is not a character that I can suffer to develop itself beneath my eyes without an effort at improvement. You must endeavour, sir, to change it. We must endeavour to change it for you."

"I beg your pardon, sir," I faltered. "I have never meant to be sullen since I came back."

"Don't take refuge in a lie, sir!" he returned so fiercely, that I saw my mother involuntarily put out her trembling hand as if to interpose between us. "You have withdrawn yourself in your sullenness to your own room. You have kept your own room when you ought to have been here. You know now, once for all, that I require you to be here, and not there. Further, that I require you to bring obedience here. You know me, David. I will have it done."

Miss Murdstone gave a hoarse chuckle.

"I will have a respectful, prompt, and ready bearing towards myself," he continued, "and towards Jane Murdstone, and towards your mother. I will not have this room shunned as if it were infected, at the pleasure of a child. Sit down."

He ordered me like a dog, and I obeyed like a dog.

"One thing more," he said. "I observe that you have an attachment to low and common company. You are not to associate with servants. The kitchen will not improve you, in the many respects in which you need improvement. Of the woman who abets you, I say nothing—since you, Clara," addressing my mother in a lower voice, "from old associations and long-established fancies, have a weakness respecting her which is not yet overcome."

"A most unaccountable delusion it is!" cried Miss Murdstone.

"I only say," he resumed, addressing me, "that I disapprove of your preferring such company as Mistress Peggotty, and that it is to be abandoned. Now, David, you understand me, and you know what will be the consequence if you fail to obey me to the letter."

I knew well—better perhaps than he thought, as far as my poor mother was concerned—and I obeyed him to the letter. I retreated to my own room no more; I took refuge with Peggotty no more; but sat wearily in the parlor day after day, looking forward to night, and bedtime.

What irksome constraint I underwent, sitting in the same attitude hours upon hours, afraid to move an arm or a leg lest Miss Murdstone should complain (as she did on the least pretence) of my restlessness, and afraid to move an eye lest it should light on some look of dislike or scrutiny that would find new cause for complaint in mine! What intolerable dullness to sit listening to the ticking of the clock; and watching Miss Murdstone's little shiny steel beads as she strung them; and wondering whether she would ever be married, and if so, to what sort of unhappy man; and counting the divisions in the moulding on the chimney-piece; and wandering away, with my eyes, to the ceiling, among the curls and corkscrews in the paper on the wall!

What walks I took alone, down muddy lanes, in the bad winter weather, carrying that parlor, and Mr. and Miss Murdstone in it, everywhere: a monstrous load that I was obliged to bear, a nightmare that there was no possibility of breaking in, a weight that brooded on my wits, and blunted them!

afterwards; that she was not only ceaselessly afraid of her own offending, but of my offending, and uneasily watched their looks if I only moved. Therefore I resolved to keep myself as much out of their way as I could; and many a wintry hour did I hear the church-clock strike, when I was sitting in my cheerless bedroom, wrapped in my little great-coat, poring over a book.

In the evening, sometimes, I went and sat with Peggotty in the kitchen. There I was comfortable, and not afraid of being myself. But neither of these resources was approved of in the parlor. The tormenting humor which was dominant there stopped them both. I was still held to be necessary to my poor mother's training, and, as one of her trials, could not be suffered to absent myself.

"David," said Mr. Murdstone, one day after dinner when I was going to leave the room as usual; "I am sorry to observe that you are of a sullen disposition."

"As sulky as a bear!" said Miss Murdstone.

I stood still, and hung my head.

"Now, David," said Mr. Murdstone, "a sullen obdurate disposition is, of all tempers, the worst."

"And the boy's is, of all such dispositions that ever I have seen," remarked his sister, "the most confirmed and stubborn. I think, my dear Clara, even you must observe it?"

"I beg your pardon, my dear Jane," said my mother, "but are you quite sure—I am certain you'll excuse me, my dear Jane—that you understand Davy?"

"I should be somewhat ashamed of myself, Clara," returned Miss Murdstone, "if I could not understand the boy, or any boy. I don't profess to be profound; but I do lay claim to common sense."

"No doubt, my dear Jane," returned my mother, "your understanding is very vigorous—"

"Oh dear, no! Pray don't say that, Clara," interposed Miss Murdstone, angrily.

"But I am sure it is," resumed my mother; "and everybody knows it is. I profit so much by it myself, in many ways—at least I ought to—that no one can be more convinced of it than myself; and therefore I speak with great diffidence, my dear Jane, I assure you."

"We'll say I don't understand the boy, Clara," returned Miss Murdstone, arranging the little fetters on her wrists. "We'll agree, if you please, that I don't understand him at all. He is much too deep for me. But perhaps my brother's penetration may enable him to have some insight into his character. And I believe my brother was speaking on the subject when we—not very decently—interrupted him."

"I think, Clara," said Mr. Murdstone, in a low, grave voice, "that there may be better and more dispassionate judges of such a question than you."

"Edward," replied my mother, timidly, "you are a far better judge of all questions than I pretend to be. Both you and Jane are. I only said—"

"You only said something weak and inconsiderate," he replied. "Try not to do it again, my dear Clara, and keep a watch upon yourself."

My mother's lips moved, as if she answered "Yes, my dear Edward," but she said nothing aloud.

"I was sorry, David, I remarked," said Mr. Murdstone, turning his head

though she was not subject to such weaknesses in general, into a state of violent consternation. I came into the room where she and my mother were sitting; and the baby (who was only a few weeks old) being on my mother's lap, I took it very carefully in my arms. Suddenly Miss Murdstone gave such a scream that I all but dropped it.

"My dear Jane!" cried my mother.

"Good heavens, Clara, do you see?" exclaimed Miss Murdstone.

"See what, my dear Jane?" said my mother; "where?"

"He's got it!" cried Miss Murdstone. "The boy has got the baby!"

She was limp with horror; but stiffened herself to make a dart at me, and take it out of my arms. Then, she turned faint; and was so very ill, that they were obliged to give her cherry-brandy. I was solemnly interdicted by her, on her recovery, from touching my brother any more on any pretence whatever; and my poor mother, who, I could see, wished otherwise, meekly confirmed the interdict, by saying: "No doubt you are right, my dear Jane."

On another occasion, when we three were together, this same dear baby—it was truly dear to me, for our mother's sake—was the innocent occasion of Miss Murdstone's going into a passion. My mother, who had been looking at its eyes as it lay upon her lap, said:

"Davy! come here!" and looked at mine.

I saw Miss Murdstone lay her beads down.

"I declare," said my mother, gently, "they are exactly alike. I suppose they are mine. I think they are the color of mine. But they are wonderfully alike."

"What are you talking about, Clara?" said Miss Murdstone.

"My dear Jane," faltered my mother, a little abashed by the harsh tone of this inquiry, "I find that the baby's eyes and Davy's are exactly alike."

"Clara!" said Miss Murdstone, rising angrily, "you are a positive fool sometimes."

"My dear Jane," remonstrated my mother.

"A positive fool," said Miss Murdstone. "Who else could compare my brother's baby with your boy? They are not at all alike. They are exactly unlike. They are utterly dissimilar in all respects. I hope they will ever remain so. I will not sit here, and hear such comparisons made." With that she stalked out, and made the door bang after her.

In short, I was not a favorite with Miss Murdstone. In short, I was not a favorite there with anybody, not even with myself; for those who did like me could not show it, and those who did not, showed it so plainly that I had a sensitive consciousness of always appearing constrained, boorish, and dull.

I felt that I made them as uncomfortable as they made me. If I came into the room where they were, and they were talking together and my mother seemed cheerful, an anxious cloud would steal over her face from the moment of my entrance. If Mr. Murdstone were in his best humor, I checked him. If Miss Murdstone were in her worst, I intensified it. I had perception enough to know that my mother was the victim always; that she was afraid to speak to me or be kind to me, lest she should give them some offence by her manner of doing so, and receive a lecture

Peggotty was not slow to respond, and ratified the treaty of friendship by giving me one of her best hugs. I think I had some glimpses of the real character of this conversation at the time; but I am sure, now, that the good creature originated it, and took her part in it, merely that my mother might comfort herself with the little contradictory summary in which she had indulged. The design was efficacious; for I remember that my mother seemed more at ease during the rest of the evening, and that Peggotty observed her less.

When we had had our tea, and the ashes were thrown up, and the candles snuffed, I read Peggotty a chapter out of the Crocodile Book, in remembrance of old times—she took it out of her pocket: I don't know whether she had kept it there ever since—and then we talked about Salem House, which brought me round again to Steerforth, who was my great subject. We were very happy; and that evening, as the last of its race, and destined evermore to close that volume of my life, will never pass out of my memory.

It was almost ten o'clock before we heard the sound of wheels. We all got up then; and my mother said hurriedly that, as it was so late, and Mr. and Miss Murdstone approved of early hours for young people, perhaps I had better go to bed. I kissed her, and went up-stairs with my candle directly, before they came in. It appeared to my childish fancy, as I ascended to the bedroom where I had been imprisoned, that they brought a cold blast of air into the house which blew away the old familiar feeling like a feather.

I felt uncomfortable about going down to breakfast in the morning, as I had never set eyes on Mr. Murdstone since the day when I committed my memorable offence. However, as it must be done, I went down, after two or three false starts half-way, and as many runs back on tiptoe to my own room, and presented myself in the parlor.

He was standing before the fire with his back to it, while Miss Murdstone made the tea. He looked at me steadily as I entered, but made no sign of recognition whatever.

I went up to him, after a moment of confusion, and said: "I beg your pardon, sir. I am very sorry for what I did, and I hope you will forgive me."

"I am glad to hear you are sorry, David," he replied.

The hand he gave me was the hand I had bitten. I could not restrain my eye from resting for an instant on a red spot upon it; but it was not so red as I turned, when I met that sinister expression in his face.

"How do you do, ma'am," I said to Miss Murdstone.

"Ah, dear me!" sighed Miss Murdstone, giving me the tea-caddy scoop instead of her fingers. "How long are the holidays?"

"A month, ma'am."

"Counting from when?"

"From to-day, ma'am."

"Oh!" said Miss Murdstone. "Then here's *one day off*."

She kept a calendar of the holidays in this way, and every morning checked a day off in exactly the same manner. She did it gloomily until she came to ten, but when she got into two figures she became more hopeful, and, as the time advanced, even jocular.

It was on this very first day that I had the misfortune to throw her,

"I know what you mean, you cross thing," said my mother. "I understand you, Peggotty, perfectly. You know I do, and I wonder you don't color up like fire. But one point at a time. Miss Murdstone is the point now, Peggotty, and you sha'n't escape from it. Haven't you heard her say, over and over again, that she thinks I am too thoughtless and too—a—a—"

"Pretty," suggested Peggotty.

"Well," returned my mother, half laughing, "and if she is so silly as to say so, can I be blamed for it?"

"No one says you can," said Peggotty.

"No, I should hope not, indeed!" returned my mother. "Haven't you heard her say, over and over again, that on this account she wishes to spare me a great deal of trouble, which she thinks I am not suited for, and which I really don't know myself that I *am* suited for; and isn't she up early and late, and going to and fro continually—and doesn't she do all sorts of things, and grope into all sorts of places, coal-holes and pantries and I don't know where, that can't be very agreeable—and do you mean to insinuate that there is not a sort of devotion in that?"

"I don't insinuate at all," said Peggotty.

"You do, Peggotty," returned my mother. "You never do anything else, except your work. You are always insinuating. You revel in it. And when you talk of Mr. Murdstone's good intentions—"

"I never talked of 'em," said Peggotty.

"No, Peggotty," returned my mother, "but you insinuated. That's what I told you just now. That's the worst of you. You *will* insinuate. I said, at the moment, that I understood you, and you see I did. When you talk of Mr. Murdstone's good intentions, and pretend to slight them (for I don't believe you really do, in your heart, Peggotty), you must be as well convinced as I am how good they are, and how they actuate him in everything. If he seems to have been at all stern with a certain person, Peggotty—you understand, and so I am sure does Davy, that I am not alluding to any body present—it is solely because he is satisfied that it is for a certain person's benefit. He naturally loves a certain person, on my account; and acts solely for a certain person's good. He is better able to judge of it than I am; for I very well know that I am a weak, light, girlish creature, and that he is a firm, grave, serious man. And he takes," said my mother, with the tears which were engendered in her affectionate nature, stealing down her face, "he takes great pains with me; and I ought to be very thankful to him, and very submissive to him even in my thoughts; and when I am not, Peggotty, I worry and condemn myself, and feel doubtful of my own heart, and don't know what to do."

Peggotty sat with her chin on the foot of the stocking, looking silently at the fire.

"There, Peggotty," said my mother, changing her tone, "don't let us fall out with one another, for I couldn't bear it. You are my true friend, I know, if I have any in the world. When I call you a ridiculous creature, or a vexatious thing, or anything of that sort, Peggotty, I only mean that you are my true friend, and always have been, ever since the night when Mr. Copperfield first brought me home here, and you came out to the gate to meet me."

sat with it drawn on her left hand like a glove, and her needle in her right, ready to take another stitch whenever there was a blaze. I cannot conceive whose stockings they can have been that Peggotty was always darning, or where such an unfailing supply of stockings in want of darning can have come from. From my earliest infancy she seems to have been always employed in that class of needlework, and never by any chance in any other.

"I wonder," said Peggotty, who was sometimes seized with a fit of wondering on some most unexpected topic, "what's become of Davy's great-aunt?"

"Lor, Peggotty!" observed my mother, rousing herself from a reverie, "what nonsense you talk!"

"Well, but I really do wonder, ma'am," said Peggotty.

"What can have put such a person in your head?" inquired my mother.

"Is there nobody else in the world to come there?"

"I don't know how it is," said Peggotty, "unless it's on account of being stupid, but my head never can pick and choose its people. They come and they go, and they don't come and they don't go, just as they like. I wonder what's become of her?"

"How absurd you are, Peggotty," returned my mother. "One would suppose you wanted a second visit from her."

"Lord forbid!" cried Peggotty.

"Well then, don't talk about such uncomfortable things, there's a good soul," said my mother. "Miss Betsey is shut up in her cottage by the sea, no doubt, and will remain there. At all events, she is not likely ever to trouble us again."

"No!" mused Peggotty. "No, that ain't likely at all.—I wonder, if she was to die, whether she'd leave Davy anything?"

"Good gracious me," Peggotty, returned my mother, "what a nonsensical woman you are! when you know that she took offence at the poor dear boy's ever being born at all!"

"I suppose she wouldn't be inclined to forgive him now," hinted Peggotty.

"Why should she be inclined to forgive him now?" said my mother, rather sharply.

"Now that he's got a brother, I mean," said Peggotty.

My mother immediately began to cry, and wondered how Peggotty dared to say such a thing.

"As if this poor little innocent in its cradle had ever done any harm to you or anybody else, you jealous thing!" said she. "You had much better go and marry Mr. Barkis, the carrier. Why don't you?"

"I should make Miss Murdstone happy, if I was to," said Peggotty.

"What a bad disposition you have, Peggotty!" returned my mother. "You are as jealous of Miss Murdstone as it is possible for a ridiculous creature to be. You want to keep the keys yourself, and give out all the things, I suppose? I shouldn't be surprised if you did. When you know that she only does it out of kindness and the best intentions! You know she does, Peggotty—you know it well."

Peggotty muttered something to the effect of "Bother the best intentions!" and something else to the effect that there was a little too much of the best intentions going on.

almost transparent. But the change to which I now refer was superadded to this: it was in her manner, which became anxious and fluttered. At last she said, putting out her hand, and laying it affectionately on the hand of her old servant,

"Peggotty, dear, you are not going to be married?"

"Me, ma'am?" returned Peggotty, staring. "Lord bless you, no!"

"Not just yet?" said my mother, tenderly.

"Never!" cried Peggotty.

My mother took her hand, and said:

"Don't leave me, Peggotty. Stay with me. It will not be for long, perhaps. What should I ever do without you!"

"Me leave you, my precious!" cried Peggotty. "Not for all the world and his wife. Why, what's put that in your silly little head?"—For Peggotty had been used of old to talk to my mother sometimes like a child.

But my mother made no answer, except to thank her, and Peggotty went running on in her own fashion.

"Me leave you? I think I see myself. Peggotty go away from you? I should like to catch her at it! No, no, no," said Peggotty, shaking her head, and folding her arms; "not she, my dear. It isn't that there ain't some Cats that would be well enough pleased if she did, but they shan't be pleased. They shall be aggravated. I'll stay with you till I am a cross cranky old woman. And when I'm too deaf, and too lame, and too blind, and too mumbly for want of teeth, to be of any use at all, even to be found fault with, then I shall go to my Davy, and ask him to take me in."

"And, Peggotty," says I, "I shall be glad to see you, and I'll make you as welcome as a queen."

"Bless your dear heart!" cried Peggotty. "I know you will!" And she kissed me beforehand, in grateful acknowledgment of my hospitality. After that, she covered her head up with her apron again, and had another laugh about Mr. Barkis. After that, she took the baby out of its little cradle, and nursed it. After that, she cleared the dinner-table; after that, came in with another cap on, and her work-box, and the yard-measure, and the bit of wax candle, all just the same as ever.

We sat round the fire, and talked delightfully: I told them what a hard master Mr. Creakle was, and they pitied me very much. I told them what a fine fellow Steerforth was, and what a patron of mine, and Peggotty said she would walk a score of miles to see him. I took the little baby in my arms when it was awake, and nursed it lovingly. When it was asleep again, I crept close to my mother's side according to my old custom, broken now a long time, and sat with my arms embracing her waist, and my little red cheek on her shoulder, and once more felt her beautiful hair drooping over me—like an angel's wing as I used to think, I recollect—and was very happy indeed.

While I sat thus, looking at the fire, and seeing pictures in the red-hot coals, I almost believed that I had never been away; that Mr. and Miss Murdstone were such pictures, and would vanish when the fire got low; and that there was nothing real in all that I remembered, save my mother, Peggotty, and I.

Peggotty darned away at a stocking as long as she could see, and then

called me her dear Davy, her own boy! and coming half across the room to meet me, kneeled down upon the ground and kissed me, and laid my head down on her bosom near the little creature that was nestling there, and put its hand up to my lips.

I wish I had died. I wish I had died then, with that feeling in my heart! I should have been more fit for Heaven than I ever have been since.

"He is your brother," said my mother, fondling me. "Davy, my pretty boy! My poor child!" Then she kissed me more and more, and clasped me round the neck. This she was doing when Peggotty came running in, and bounced down on the ground beside us, and went mad about us both for a quarter of an hour.

It seemed that I had not been expected so soon, the carrier being much before his usual time. It seemed, too, that Mr. and Miss Murdstone had gone out upon a visit in the neighbourhood, and would not return before night. I had never hoped for this. I had never thought it possible that we three could be together undisturbed, once more; and I felt, for the time, as if the old days were come back.

We dined together by the fireside. Peggotty was in attendance to wait upon us, but my mother wouldn't let her do it, and made her dine with us. I had my own old plate, with a brown view of a man-of-war in full sail upon it, which Peggotty had hoarded somewhere all the time I had been away, and would not have had broken, she said, for a hundred pounds. I had my own old mug with David on it, and my own old little knife and fork that wouldn't cut.

While we were at table, I thought it a favorable occasion to tell Peggotty about Mr. Barkis, who, before I had finished what I had to tell her, began to laugh, and threw her apron over her face.

"Peggotty!" said my mother. "What's the matter?"

Peggotty only laughed the more, and held her apron tight over her face when my mother tried to pull it away, and sat as if her head were in a bag.

"What are you doing, you stupid creature?" said my mother, laughing.

"Oh, drat the man!" cried Peggotty. "He wants to marry me."

"It would be a very good match for you; wouldn't it?" said my mother.

"Oh! I don't know," said Peggotty. "Don't ask me. I wouldn't have him if he was made of gold. Nor I wouldn't have anybody."

"Then, why don't you tell him so, you ridiculous thing?" said my mother.

"Tell him so," retorted Peggotty, looking out of her apron. "He has never said a word to me about it. He knows better. If he was to make so bold as say a word to me, I should slap his face."

Her own was as red as ever I saw it, or any other face, I think; but she only covered it again, for a few moments at a time, when she was taken with a violent fit of laughter; and after two or three of those attacks, went on with her dinner.

I remarked that my mother, though she smiled when Peggotty looked at her, became more serious and thoughtful. I had seen at first that she was changed. Her face was very pretty still, but it looked careworn, and too delicate; and her hand was so thin and white that it seemed to me to be

"Would you like me to do it, Mr. Barkis?" said I, doubtfully.

"You might tell her, if you would," said Mr. Barkis, with another slow look at me, "that Barkis was a waitin' for a answer. Says you—what name is it?"

"Her name?"

"Ah!" said Mr. Barkis, with a nod of his head.

"Peggotty."

"Chrisen name? Or nat'ral name?" said Mr. Barkis.

"Oh, it's not her christian name. Her christian name is Clara."

"Is it though!" said Mr. Barkis.

He seemed to find an immense fund of reflection in this circumstance, and sat pondering and inwardly whistling for some time.

"Well!" he resumed at length. "Says you, 'Peggotty! Barkis is a waitin' for a answer.' Says she, perhaps, 'Answer to what?' Says you, 'To what I told you.' 'What is that?' says she. 'Barkis is willin', says you.'"

This extremely artful suggestion, Mr. Barkis accompanied with a nudge of his elbow that gave me quite a stitch in my side. After that, he slouched over his horse in his usual manner; and made no other reference to the subject except, half an hour afterwards, taking a piece of chalk from his pocket, and writing up, inside the tilt of the cart, "Clara Peggotty"—apparently as a private memorandum.

Ah, what a strange feeling it was to be going home when it was not home, and to find that every object I looked at, reminded me of the happy old home, which was like a dream I could never dream again! The days when my mother and I and Peggotty were all in all to one another, and there was no one to come between us, rose up before me so sorrowfully on the road, that I am not sure I was glad to be there—not sure but that I would rather have remained away, and forgotten it in Steerforth's company. But there I was; and soon I was at our house, where the bare old elm trees wrung their many hands in the bleak wintry air, and shreds of the old rooks' nests drifted away upon the wind.

The carrier put my box down at the garden gate, and left me. I walked along the path towards the house, glancing at the windows, and fearing at every step to see Mr. Murdstone or Miss Murdstone lowering out of one of them. No face appeared, however; and being 'come to the house, and knowing how to open the door, before dark, without knocking, I went in with a quiet, timid step.

God knows how infantine the memory may have been, that was awakened within me by the sound of my mother's voice in the old parlor, when I set foot in the hall. She was singing in a low tone. I think I must have lain in her arms, and heard her singing so to me when I was but a baby. The strain was new to me, and yet it was so old that it filled my heart brim-full; like a friend come back from a long absence.

I believed, from the solitary and thoughtful way in which my mother murmured her song, that she was alone. And I went softly into the room. She was sitting by the fire, suckling an infant, whose tiny hand she held against her neck. Her eyes were looking down upon its face, and she sat singing to it. I was so far right, that she had no other companion.

I spoke to her, and she started, and cried out. But seeing me, she

CHAPTER VIII.

MY HOLIDAYS. ESPECIALLY ONE HAPPY AFTERNOON.

WHEN we arrived before day at the inn where the mail stopped, which was not the inn where my friend the waiter lived, I was shown up to a nice little bedroom, with DOLPHIN painted on the door. Very cold I was I know, notwithstanding the hot tea they had given me before a large fire down-stairs; and very glad I was to turn into the Dolphin's bed, pull the Dolphin's blankets round my head, and go to sleep.

Mr. Barkis the carrier was to call for me in the morning at nine o'clock. I got up at eight, a little giddy from the shortness of my night's rest, and was ready for him before the appointed time. He received me exactly as if not five minutes had elapsed since we were last together, and I had only been into the hotel to get change for sixpence, or something of that sort.

As soon as I and my box were in the cart, and the carrier seated, the lazy horse walked away with us all at his accustomed pace.

"You look very well, Mr. Barkis," I said, thinking he would like to know it.

Mr. Barkis rubbed his cheek with his cuff, and then looked at his cuff as if he expected to find some of the bloom upon it; but made no other acknowledgment of the compliment.

"I gave your message, Mr. Barkis," I said; "I wrote to Peggotty."

"Ah!" said Mr. Barkis.

Mr. Barkis seemed gruff, and answered drily.

"Wasn't it right, Mr. Barkis?" I asked, after a little hesitation.

"Why, no," said Mr. Barkis.

"Not the message?"

"The message was right enough, perhaps," said Mr. Barkis; "but it come to an end there."

Not understanding what he meant, I repeated inquisitively: "Came to an end, Mr. Barkis?"

"Nothing come of it," he explained, looking at me sideways. "No answer."

"There was an answer expected, was there, Mr. Barkis?" said I, opening my eyes. For this was a new light to me.

"When a man says he's willin'," said Mr. Barkis, turning his glance slowly on me again, "it's as much as to say, that man's a waitin' for a answer."

"Well, Mr. Barkis?"

"Well," said Mr. Barkis, carrying his eyes back to his horse's ears; "that man's been a waitin' for a answer ever since."

"Have you told her so, Mr. Barkis?"

"N—no," growled Mr. Barkis, reflecting about it. "I ain't got no call to go and tell her so. I never said six words to her myself. I ain't a goin' to tell her so."

should come along with Mas'r Davy to see it. I'm a reg'lar Dodman, I am," said Mr. Peggotty; by which he meant snail, and this was in allusion to his being slow to go, for he had attempted to go after every sentence, and had somehow or other come back again; "but I wish you both well, and I wish you happy!"

Ham echoed this sentiment, and we parted with them in the heartiest manner. I was almost tempted that evening to tell Steerforth about pretty little Em'ly, but I was too timid of mentioning her name, and too much afraid of his laughing at me. I remember that I thought a good deal, and in an uneasy sort of way, about Mr. Peggotty having said that she was getting on to be a woman; but I decided that was nonsense.

We transported the shell-fish, or the "relish" as Mr. Peggotty had modestly called it, up into our room unobserved, and made a great supper that evening. But Traddles couldn't get happily out of it. He was too unfortunate even to come through a supper like anybody else. He was taken ill in the night—quite prostrate he was—in consequence of Crab; and after being drugged with black draughts and blue pills, to an extent which Dimple (whose father was a doctor) said was enough to undermine a horse's constitution, received a caning and six chapters of Greek Testament for refusing to confess.

The rest of the half-year is a jumble in my recollection of the daily strife and struggle of our lives; of the waning summer and the changing season; of the frosty mornings when we were rung out of bed, and the cold, cold smell of the dark nights when we were rung into bed again; of the evening schoolroom dimly lighted and indifferently warmed, and the morning schoolroom which was nothing but a great shivering-machine; of the alternation of boiled beef with roast beef, and boiled mutton with roast mutton; of clods of bread-and-butter, dog's-eared lesson-books, cracked slates, tear-blotted copy-books, canings, rulerings, hair-cuttings, rainy Sundays, suet puddings, and a dirty atmosphere of ink surrounding all.

I well remember though, how the distant idea of the holidays, after seeming for an immense time to be a stationary speck, began to come towards us, and to grow and grow. How, from counting months, we came to weeks, and then to days; and how I then began to be afraid that I should not be sent for, and, when I learnt from Steerforth that I *had* been sent for and was certainly to go home, had dim forebodings that I might break my leg first. How the breaking-up day changed its place fast, at last, from the week after next to next week, this week, the day after to-morrow, to-morrow, to day, to-night—when I was inside the Yarmouth mail, and going home.

I had many a broken sleep inside the Yarmouth mail, and many an incoherent dream of all these things. But when I awoke at intervals, the ground outside the window was not the playground of Salem House, and the sound in my ears was not the sound of Mr. Creakle giving it to Traddles, but the sound of the coachman touching up the horses.

much more about her, if they had not been abashed by the unexpected coming in of Steerforth, who, seeing me in a corner speaking with two strangers, stopped in a song he was singing, and said: "I didn't know you were here, young Copperfield!" (for it was not the usual visiting room), and crossed by us on his way out.

I am not sure whether it was in the pride of having such a friend as Steerforth, or in the desire to explain to him how I came to have such a friend as Mr. Peggotty, that I called to him as he was going away. But I said, modestly—Good Heaven, how it all comes back to me this long time afterwards!—

"Don't go, Steerforth, if you please. These are two Yarmouth boatmen—very kind, good people—who are relations of my nurse, and have come from Gravesend to see me."

"Aye, aye?" said Steerforth, returning. "I am glad to see them. How are you both?"

There was an ease in his manner—a gay and light manner it was, but not swaggering—which I still believe to have borne a kind of enchantment with it. I still believe him, in virtue of this carriage, his animal spirits, his delightful voice, his handsome face and figure, and, for aught I know, of some inborn power of attraction besides (which I think a few people possess), to have carried a spell with him to which it was a natural weakness to yield, and which not many persons could withstand. I could not but see how pleased they were with him, and how they seemed to open their hearts to him in a moment.

"You must let them know at home, if you please, Mr. Peggotty," I said, "when that letter is sent, that Mr. Steerforth is very kind to me, and that I don't know what I should ever do here without him."

"Nonsense!" said Steerforth, laughing. "You mustn't tell them anything of the sort."

"And if Mr. Steerforth ever comes into Norfolk or Suffolk, Mr. Peggotty," I said, "while I am there, you may depend upon it I shall bring him to Yarmouth, if he will let me, to see your house. You never saw such a good house, Steerforth. It's made out of a boat!"

"Made out of a boat, is it?" said Steerforth. "It's the right sort of house for such a thorough-built boatman."

"So 'tis, sir, so 'tis, sir," said Ham, grinning. "You're right, young gen'lm'n. Mas'r Davy bo', gen'lm'n's right. A thorough-built boatman! Hor, hor! That's what he is, too!"

Mr. Peggotty was no less pleased than his nephew, though his modesty forbade him to claim a personal compliment so vociferously.

"Well, sir," he said, bowing and chuckling, and tucking in the ends of his neckerchief at his breast, "I thankee, sir, I thankee! I do my endeavours in my line of life, sir."

"The best of men can do no more, Mr. Peggotty," said Steerforth. He had got his name already.

"I'll pound it, it's wot you do yourself, sir," said Mr. Peggotty, shaking his head, "and wot you do well—right well! I thankee, sir. I'm obleeged to you, sir, for your welcoming manner of me. I'm rough, sir, but I'm ready—least ways, I *hope* I'm ready, you understand. My house ain't much for to see, sir, but it's hearty at your service if ever you

They made me laugh again by laughing at each other, and then we all three laughed until I was in danger of crying again.

"Do you know how mama is, Mr. Peggotty?" I said. "And how my dear, dear, old Peggotty is?"

"Oncommon," said Mr. Peggotty.

"And little Em'ly, and Mrs. Gummidge?"

"On—common," said Mr. Peggotty.

There was a silence. Mr. Peggotty, to relieve it, took two prodigious lobsters, and an enormous crab, and a large canvas bag of shrimps, out of his pockets, and piled them up in Ham's arms.

"You see," said Mr. Peggotty, "knowing as you was partial to a little relish with your wittles when you was along with us, we took the liberty. The old Mawther biled 'em, she did. Mrs. Gummidge biled 'em. Yes," said Mr. Peggotty slowly, who I thought appeared to stick to the subject on account of having no other subject ready, "Mrs. Gummidge, I do assure you, she biled 'em."

I expressed my thanks; and Mr. Peggotty, after looking at Ham, who stood smiling sheepishly over the shell-fish, without making any attempt to help him, said:

"We come, you see, the wind and tide making in our favor, in one of our Yarmouth lugs to Gravesen'. My sister she wrote to me the name of this here place, and wrote to me as if ever I chanced to come to Gravesen', I was to come over and enquire for Mas'r Davy and give her dooty, humbly wishing him well and reporting of the fam'ly as they was oncommon toe-be-sure. Little Em'ly, you see, she'll write to my sister when I go back, as I see you and as you was similarly oncommon, and so we make it quite a merry-go-round."

I was obliged to consider a little before I understood what Mr. Peggotty meant by this figure, expressive of a complete circle of intelligence. I then thanked him heartily; and said, with a consciousness of reddening, that I supposed Little Em'ly was altered too, since we used to pick up shells and pebbles on the beach?

"She's getting to be a woman, that's wot she's getting to be," said Mr. Peggotty. "Ask him."

He meant Ham, who beamed with delight and assent over the bag of shrimps.

"Her pretty face!" said Mr. Peggotty, with his own shining like a light.

"Her learning!" said Ham.

"Her writing!" said Mr. Peggotty. "Why, it's as black as jet! And so large it is, you might see it anywheres."

It was perfectly delightful to behold with what enthusiasm Mr. Peggotty became inspired when he thought of his little favorite. He stands before me again, his bluff hairy face irradiating with a joyful love and pride, for which I can find no description. His honest eyes fire up, and sparkle, as if their depths were stirred by something bright. His broad chest heaves with pleasure. His strong loose hands clench themselves, in his earnestness; and he emphasises what he says with a right arm that shows, in my pigmy view, like a sledge hammer.

Ham was quite as earnest as he. I dare say they would have said

for our cause ; and that he had conferred a great boon upon us by unselfishly doing it.

But I must say that when I was going on with a story in the dark that night, Mr. Mell's old flute seemed more than once to sound mournfully in my ears ; and that when at last Steerforth was tired, and I lay down in my bed, I fancied it playing so sorrowfully somewhere, that I was quite wretched.

I soon forgot him in the contemplation of Steerforth, who, in an easy amateur way, and without any book (he seemed to me to know everything by heart), took some of his classes until a new master was found. The new master came from a grammar-school ; and before he entered on his duties, dined in the parlor one day to be introduced to Steerforth. Steerforth approved of him highly, and told us he was a Brick. Without exactly understanding what learned distinction was meant by this, I respected him greatly for it, and had no doubt whatever of his superior knowledge : though he never took the pains with me—not that I was anybody—that Mr. Mell had taken.

There was only one other event in this half-year, out of the daily school-life, that made an impression on me which still survives. It survives for many reasons.

One afternoon, when we were all harassed into a state of dire confusion, and Mr. Creakle was laying about him dreadfully, Tungay came in, and called out in his usual strong way : “ Visitors for Copperfield ! ”

A few words were interchanged between him and Mr. Creakle, as, who the visitors were, and what room they were to be shown into ; and then I, who had, according to custom, stood up on the announcement being made, and felt quite faint with astonishment, was told to go by the back stairs and get a clean frill on, before I repaired to the dining-room. These orders I obeyed, in such a flutter and hurry of my young spirits as I had never known before ; and when I got to the parlor-door, and the thought came into my head that it might be my mother—I had only thought of Mr. or Miss Murdstone until then—I drew back my hand from the lock, and stopped to have a sob before I went in.

At first I saw nobody ; but feeling a pressure against the door, I looked round it, and there, to my amusement, were Mr. Peggotty and Ham, ducking at me with their hats, and squeezing one another against the wall. I could not help laughing ; but it was much more in the pleasure of seeing them, than at the appearance they made. We shook hands in a very cordial way ; and I laughed and laughed, until I pulled out my pocket-handkerchief and wiped my eyes.

Mr. Peggotty (who never shut his mouth once, I remember, during the visit) showed great concern when he saw me do this, and nudged Ham to say something.

“ Cheer up, Mas'r Davy bo' ! ” said Ham, in his simpering way. “ Why, how you have growed ! ”

“ Am I grown ? ” I said, drying my eyes. I was not crying at anything particular that I know of ; but somehow it made me cry to see old friends.

“ Growed, Mas'r Davy bo' ? Ain't he growed ! ” said Ham.

“ Ain't he growed ! ” said Mr. Peggotty.

"I apprehend, if you come to that," said Mr. Creakle, with his veins swelling again bigger than ever, "that you've been in a wrong position altogether, and mistook this for a charity school. Mr. Mell, we'll part if you please. The sooner the better."

"There is no time," answered Mr. Mell, rising, "like the present."

"Sir, to you!" said Mr. Creakle.

"I take my leave of you, Mr. Creakle, and of all of you," said Mr. Mell, glancing round the room, and again patting me gently on the shoulder. "James Steerforth, the best wish I can leave you is that you may come to be ashamed of what you have done to-day. At present I would prefer to see you anything rather than a friend, to me, or to any one in whom I feel an interest."

Once more he laid his hand upon my shoulder; and then taking his flute and a few books from his desk, and leaving the key in it for his successor, he went out of the school, with his property under his arm. Mr. Creakle then made a speech, through Tungay, in which he thanked Steerforth for asserting (though perhaps too warmly) the independence and respectability of Salem House; and which he wound up by shaking hands with Steerforth, while we gave three cheers—I did not quite know what for, but I supposed for Steerforth, and so joined in them ardently, though I felt miserable. Mr. Creakle then caned Tommy Traddles for being discovered in tears, instead of cheers, on account of Mr. Mell's departure; and went back to his sofa, or his bed, or wherever he had come from.

We were left to ourselves now, and looked very blank, I recollect, on one another. For myself, I felt so much self-reproach and contrition for my part in what had happened, that nothing would have enabled me to keep back my tears but the fear that Steerforth, who often looked at me, I saw, might think it unfriendly—or, I should rather say, considering our relative ages, and the feeling with which I regarded him, undutiful—if I showed the emotion which distressed me. He was very angry with Traddles, and said he was glad he had caught it.

Poor Traddles, who had passed the stage of lying with his head upon the desk, and was relieving himself as usual with a burst of skeletons, said he didn't care. Mr. Mell was ill-used.

"Who has ill-used him, you girl?" said Steerforth.

"Why, you have," returned Traddles.

"What have I done?" said Steerforth.

"What have you done?" retorted Traddles. "Hurt his feelings, and lost him his situation."

"His feelings!" repeated Steerforth disdainfully. "His feelings will soon get the better of it, I'll be bound. His feelings are not like yours, Miss Traddles. As to his situation—which was a precious one, wasn't it?—do you suppose I am not going to write home, and take care that he gets some money? Polly?"

We thought this intention very noble in Steerforth, whose mother was a widow, and rich, and would do almost anything, it was said, that he asked her. We were all extremely glad to see Traddles so put down, and exalted Steerforth to the skies: especially when he told us, as he condescended to do, that what he had done had been done expressly for us, and

talk about favorites, you showed proper respect to me? To me, sir," said Mr. Creakle, darting his head at him suddenly, and drawing it back again, "the principal of this establishment, and your employer."

"It was not judicious, sir, I am willing to admit," said Mr. Mell. "I should not have done so, if I had been cool."

Here Steerforth struck in.

"Then he said I was mean, and then he said I was base, and then I called him a beggar. If I had been cool, perhaps I shouldn't have called him a beggar. But I did, and I am ready to take the consequences of it."

Without considering, perhaps, whether there were any consequences to be taken, I felt quite in a glow at this gallant speech. It made an impression on the boys too, for there was a low stir among them, though no one spoke a word.

"I am surprised, Steerforth—although your candor does you honor," said Mr. Creakle, "does you honor, certainly—I am surprised, Steerforth, I must say, that you should attach such an epithet to any person employed and paid in Salem House, sir."

Steerforth gave a short laugh.

"That's not an answer, sir," said Mr. Creakle, "to my remark. I expect more than that, from you, Steerforth."

If Mr. Mell looked homely, in my eyes, before the handsome boy, it would be quite impossible to say how homely Mr. Creakle looked.

"Let him deny it," said Steerforth.

"Deny that he is a beggar, Steerforth?" cried Mr. Creakle. "Why, where does he go a begging?"

"If he is not a beggar himself, his near relation's one," said Steerforth. "It's all the same."

He glanced at me, and Mr. Mell's hand gently patted me upon the shoulder. I looked up, with a flush upon my face and remorse in my heart, but Mr. Mell's eyes were fixed on Steerforth. He continued to pat me kindly on the shoulder, but he looked at him.

"Since you expect me, Mr. Creakle, to justify myself," said Steerforth, "and to say what I mean,—what I have to say is, that his mother lives on charity in an alms-house."

Mr. Mell still looked at him, and still patted me kindly on the shoulder, and said to himself, in a whisper, if I heard right: "Yes, I thought so."

Mr. Creakle turned to his assistant, with a severe frown and labored politeness.

"Now, you hear what this gentleman says, Mr. Mell. Have the goodness, if you please, to set him right before the assembled school."

"He is right, sir, without correction," returned Mr. Mell, in the midst of a dead silence; "what he has said, is true."

"Be so good then as declare publicly, will you," said Mr. Creakle, putting his head on one side, and rolling his eyes round the school, "whether it ever came to my knowledge until this moment?"

"I believe not directly," he returned.

"Why, you know not," said Mr. Creakle. "Don't you, man?"

"I apprehend you never supposed my worldly circumstances to be very good," replied the assistant. "You know what my position is, and always has been, here."

you the least offence, and the many reasons for not insulting whom you are old enough and wise enough to understand," said Mr. Mell, with his lip trembling more and more, "you commit a mean and base action. You can sit down or stand up as you please, sir. Copperfield, go on."

"Young Copperfield," said Steerforth, coming forward up the room, "stop a bit. I tell you what, Mr. Mell, once for all. When you take the liberty of calling me mean or base, or anything of that sort, you are an impudent beggar. You are always a beggar, you know; but when you do that, you are an impudent beggar."

I am not clear whether he was going to strike Mr. Mell, or Mr. Mell was going to strike him, or there was any such intention on either side. I saw a rigidity come upon the whole school as if they had been turned into stone, and found Mr. Creakle in the midst of us, with Tungay at his side, and Mrs. and Miss Creakle looking in at the door as if they were frightened. Mr. Mell, with his elbows on his desk and his face in his hands, sat, for some moments, quite still.

"Mr. Mell," said Mr. Creakle, shaking him by the arm; and his whisper was so audible now, that Tungay felt it unnecessary to repeat his words; "you have not forgotten yourself, I hope?"

"No, sir, no," returned the Master, showing his face, and shaking his head, and rubbing his hands in great agitation. "No, sir. No. I have remembered myself, I—no, Mr. Creakle, I have not forgotten myself, I—I have remembered myself, sir. I—I—could wish you had remembered me a little sooner, Mr. Creakle. It—it—would have been more kind, sir, more just, sir. It would have saved me something, sir."

Mr. Creakle, looking hard at Mr. Mell, put his hand on Tungay's shoulder, and got his feet upon the form close by, and sat upon the desk. After still looking hard at Mr. Mell from this throne, as he shook his head, and rubbed his hands, and remained in the same state of agitation, Mr. Creakle turned to Steerforth, and said:

"Now, sir, as he don't condescend to tell me, what is this?"

Steerforth evaded the question for a little while; looking in scorn and anger on his opponent, and remaining silent. I could not help thinking even in that interval, I remember, what a noble fellow he was in appearance, and how homely and plain Mr. Mell looked opposed to him.

"What did he mean by talking about favorites, then!" said Steerforth at length.

"Favorites?" repeated Mr. Creakle, with the veins in his forehead swelling quickly. "Who talked about favorites?"

"He did," said Steerforth.

"And pray, what did you mean by that, sir?" demanded Mr. Creakle, turning angrily on his assistant.

"I meant, Mr. Creakle," he returned in a low voice, "as I said; that no pupil had a right to avail himself of his position of favoritism to degrade me."

"To degrade *you*?" said Mr. Creakle. "My stars! But give me leave to ask you, Mr. What's-your-name;" and here Mr. Creakle folded his arms, cane and all, upon his chest, and made such a knot of his brows that his little eyes were hardly visible below them; "whether, when you

occasion. It was the day of the week on which Mr. Sharp went out to get his wig curled; so Mr. Mell, who always did the drudgery, whatever it was, kept school by himself.

If I could associate the idea of a bull or a bear with any one so mild as Mr. Mell, I should think of him, in connexion with that afternoon when the uproar was at its height, as of one of those animals, baited by a thousand dogs. I recall him bending his aching head, supported on his bony hand, over the book on his desk, and wretchedly endeavouring to get on with his tiresome work, amidst an uproar that might have made the Speaker of the House of Commons giddy. Boys started in and out of their places, playing at puss in the corner with other boys; there were laughing boys, singing boys, talking boys, dancing boys, howling boys; boys shuffled with their feet, boys whirled about him, grinning, making faces, mimicking him behind his back and before his eyes: mimicking his poverty, his boots, his coat, his mother, everything belonging to him that they should have had consideration for.

"Silence!" cried Mr. Mell, suddenly rising up, and striking his desk with the book. "What does this mean! It's impossible to bear it. It's maddening. How can you do it to me, boys?"

It was my book that he struck his desk with; and as I stood beside him, following his eye as it glanced round the room, I saw the boys all stop, some suddenly surprised, some half afraid, and some sorry perhaps.

Steerforth's place was at the bottom of the school, at the opposite end of the long room. He was lounging with his back against the wall, and his hands in his pockets, and looked at Mr. Mell with his mouth shut up as if he were whistling, when Mr. Mell looked at him.

"Silence, Mr. Steerforth!" said Mr. Mell.

"Silence yourself," said Steerforth, turning red. "Whom are you talking to?"

"Sit down," said Mr. Mell.

"Sit down yourself," said Steerforth, "and mind your business."

There was a titter, and some applause; but Mr. Mell was so white, that silence immediately succeeded; and one boy, who had darted out behind him to imitate his mother again, changed his mind, and pretended to want a pen mended.

"If you think, Steerforth," said Mr. Mell, "that I am not acquainted with the power you can establish over any mind here"—he laid his hand, without considering what he did (as I supposed), upon my head—"or that I have not observed you, within a few minutes, urging your juniors on to every sort of outrage against me, you are mistaken."

"I don't give myself the trouble of thinking at all about you," said Steerforth, coolly; "so I'm not mistaken, as it happens."

"And when you make use of your position of favoritism here, sir," pursued Mr. Mell, with his lip trembling very much, "to insult a gentleman—"

"A what?—where is he?" said Steerforth.

Here somebody cried out, "Shame, J. Steerforth! Too bad!" It was Traddles; whom Mr. Mell instantly discomfited by bidding him hold his tongue.

—"To insult one who is not fortunate in life, sir, and who never gave

the adventures of Gil Blas; and I remember, when Gil Blas met the captain of the robbers in Madrid, this unlucky joker counterfeited such an ague of terror, that he was overheard by Mr. Creakle, who was prowling about the passage, and handsomely flogged for disorderly conduct in the bedroom.

Whatever I had within me that was romantic and dreamy, was encouraged by so much story-telling in the dark; and in that respect the pursuit may not have been very profitable to me. But the being cherished as a kind of plaything in my room, and the consciousness that this accomplishment of mine was bruited about among the boys, and attracted a good deal of notice to me though I was the youngest there, stimulated me to exertion. In a school carried on by sheer cruelty, whether it is presided over by a dunce or not, there is not likely to be much learnt. I believe our boys were, generally, as ignorant a set as any schoolboys in existence; they were too much troubled and knocked about to learn; they could no more do that to advantage, than any one can do anything to advantage in a life of constant misfortune, torment, and worry. But my little vanity, and Steerforth's help, urged me on somehow; and without saving me from much, if anything, in the way of punishment, made me, for the time I was there, an exception to the general body, insomuch that I did steadily pick up some crumbs of knowledge.

In this I was much assisted by Mr. Mell, who had a liking for me that I am grateful to remember. It always gave me pain to observe that Steerforth treated him with systematic disparagement, and seldom lost an occasion of wounding his feelings, or inducing others to do so. This troubled me the more for a long time, because I had soon told Steerforth, from whom I could no more keep such a secret, than I could keep a cake or any other tangible possession, about the two old women Mr. Mell had taken me to see; and I was always afraid that Steerforth would let it out, and twit him with it.

We little thought any one of us, I dare say, when I ate my breakfast that first morning, and went to sleep under the shadow of the peacock's feathers to the sound of the flute, what consequences would come of the introduction into those alms-houses of my insignificant person. But the visit had its unforeseen consequences; and of a serious sort, too, in their way.

One day when Mr. Creakle kept the house from indisposition, which naturally diffused a lively joy through the school, there was a good deal of noise in the course of the morning's work. The great relief and satisfaction experienced by the boys made them difficult to manage; and though the dreaded Tungay brought his wooden leg in twice or thrice, and took notes of the principal offenders' names, no great impression was made by it, as they were pretty sure of getting into trouble to-morrow do what they would, and thought it wise, no doubt, to enjoy themselves to-day.

It was, properly, a half-holiday; being Saturday. But as the noise in the playground would have disturbed Mr. Creakle, and the weather was not favorable for going out walking, we were ordered into school in the afternoon, and set some lighter tasks than usual, which were made for the

my favorite authors in the course of my interpretation of them, I am not in a condition to say, and should be very unwilling to know; but I had a profound faith in them, and I had, to the best of my belief, a simple, earnest manner of narrating what I did narrate; and these qualities went a long way.

The drawback was, that I was often sleepy at night, or out of spirits and indisposed to resume the story; and then it was rather hard work, and it must be done; for to disappoint or displease Steerforth was of course out of the question. In the morning, too, when I felt weary and should have enjoyed another hour's repose very much, it was a tiresome thing to be roused, like the Sultana Scheherazade, and forced into a long story before the getting-up bell rang; but Steerforth was resolute; and as he explained to me, in return, my sums and exercises, and anything in my tasks that was too hard for me, I was no loser by the transaction. Let me do myself justice, however. I was moved by no interested or selfish motive, nor was I moved by fear of him. I admired and loved him, and his approval was return enough. It was so precious to me that I look back on these trifles, now, with an aching heart.

Steerforth was considerate, too; and showed his consideration, in one particular instance, in an unflinching manner that was a little tantalising, I suspect, to poor Traddles and the rest. Peggotty's promised letter—what a comfortable letter it was!—arrived before “the half” was many weeks old; and with it a cake in a perfect nest of oranges, and two bottles of cowslip wine. This treasure, as in duty bound, I laid at the feet of Steerforth, and begged him to dispense.

“Now, I'll tell you what, young Copperfield,” said he: “the wine shall be kept to wet your whistle when you are story-telling.”

I blushed at the idea, and begged him, in my modesty, not to think of it. But he said he had observed I was sometimes hoarse—a little roopy was his exact expression—and it should be, every drop, devoted to the purpose he had mentioned. Accordingly, it was locked up in his box, and drawn off by himself in a phial, and administered to me through a piece of quill in the cork, when I was supposed to be in want of a restorative. Sometimes, to make it a more sovereign specific, he was so kind as to squeeze orange juice into it, or to stir it up with ginger, or dissolve a peppermint drop in it; and although I cannot assert that the flavour was improved by these experiments, or that it was exactly the compound one would have chosen for a stomachic, the last thing at night and the first thing in the morning, I drank it gratefully and was very sensible of his attention.

We seem, to me, to have been months over Peregrine, and months more over the other stories. The institution never flagged for want of a story, I am certain; and the wine lasted out almost as well as the matter. Poor Traddles—I never think of that boy but with a strange disposition to laugh, and with tears in my eyes—was a sort of chorus, in general; and affected to be convulsed with mirth at the comic parts, and to be overcome with fear when there was any passage of an alarming character in the narrative. This rather put me out, very often. It was a great jest of his, I recollect, to pretend that he couldn't keep his teeth from chattering, whenever mention was made of an Alguazil in connexion with

the boys to stand by one another. He suffered for this on several occasions; and particularly once, when Steerforth laughed in church, and the Beadle thought it was Traddles, and took him out. I see him now, going away in custody, despised by the congregation. He never said who was the real offender, though he smarted for it next day, and was imprisoned so many hours that he came forth with a whole churchyard-full of skeletons swarming all over his Latin Dictionary. But he had his reward. Steerforth said there was nothing of the sneak in Traddles, and we all felt that to be the highest praise. For my part, I could have gone through a good deal (though I was much less brave than Traddles, and nothing like so old) to have won such a recompense.

To see Steerforth walk to church before us, arm-in-arm with Miss Creakle, was one of the great sights of my life. I didn't think Miss Creakle equal to little Em'ly in point of beauty, and I didn't love her (I didn't dare); but I thought her a young lady of extraordinary attractions, and in point of gentility not to be surpassed. When Steerforth, in white trousers, carried her parasol for her, I felt proud to know him; and believed that she could not, choose but adore him with all her heart. Mr. Sharp and Mr. Mell were both notable personages in my eyes; but Steerforth was to them what the sun was to two stars.

Steerforth continued his protection of me, and proved a very useful friend; since nobody dared to annoy one whom he honored with his countenance. He couldn't—or at all events, he didn't—defend me from Mr. Creakle, who was very severe with me; but whenever I had been treated worse than usual, he always told me that I wanted a little of his pluck, and that he wouldn't have stood it himself; which I felt he intended for encouragement, and considered to be very kind of him. There was one advantage, and only one that I know of, in Mr. Creakle's severity. He found my placard in his way, when he came up or down behind the form on which I sat, and wanted to make a cut at me in passing; for this reason it was soon taken off, and I saw it no more.

An accidental circumstance cemented the intimacy between Steerforth and me, in a manner that inspired me with great pride and satisfaction, though it sometimes led to inconvenience. It happened on one occasion, when he was doing me the honor of talking to me in the playground, that I hazarded the observation that something or somebody—I forget what now—was like something or somebody in Peregrine Pickle. He said nothing at the time; but when I was going to bed at night, asked me if I had got that book.

I told him no, and explained how it was that I had read it, and all those other books of which I have made mention.

"And do you recollect them?" Steerforth said.

Oh yes, I replied; I had a good memory, and I believed I recollected them very well.

"Then I tell you what, young Copperfield," said Steerforth, "you shall tell 'em to me. I can't get to sleep very early at night, and I generally wake rather early in the morning. We'll go over 'em one after another. We'll make some regular Arabian Nights of it."

I felt extremely flattered by this arrangement, and we commenced carrying it into execution that very evening. What ravages I committed on

to him! what a launch in life I think it now, on looking back, to be so mean and servile to a man of such parts and pretensions!

Here I sit at the desk again, watching his eye—humbly watching his eye, as he rules a cyphering-book for another victim whose hands have just been flattened by that identical ruler, and who is trying to wipe the sting out with a pocket-handkerchief. I have plenty to do. I don't watch his eye in idleness, but because I am morbidly attracted to it, in a dread desire to know what he will do next, and whether it will be my turn to suffer, or somebody else's. A lane of small boys beyond me, with the same interest in his eye, watch it too. I think he knows it, though he pretends he don't. He makes dreadful mouths as he rules the cyphering-book; and now he throws his eye sideways down our lane, and we all droop over our books and tremble. A moment afterwards we are again eyeing him. An unhappy culprit, found guilty of imperfect exercise, approaches at his command. The culprit falters excuses, and professes a determination to do better to-morrow. Mr. Creakle cuts a joke before he beats him, and we laugh at it,—miserable little dogs, we laugh, with our visages as white as ashes, and our hearts sinking into our boots.

Here I sit at the desk again, on a drowsy summer afternoon. A buzz and hum go up around me, as if the boys were so many blue-bottles. A cloggy sensation of the lukewarm fat of meat is upon me (we dined an hour or two ago), and my head is as heavy as so much lead. I would give the world to go to sleep. I sit with my eye on Mr. Creakle, blinking at him like a young owl; when sleep overpowers me for a minute, he still looms through my slumber, ruling those cyphering-books; until he softly comes behind me and wakes me to plainer perception of him, with a red ridge across my back.

Here I am in the playground, with my eye still fascinated by him, though I can't see him. The window at a little distance from which I know he is having his dinner, stands for him, and I eye that instead. If he shows his face near it, mine assumes an imploring and submissive expression. If he looks out through the glass, the boldest boy (Steerforth excepted) stops in the middle of a shout or yell, and becomes contemplative. One day, Traddles (the most unfortunate boy in the world) breaks that window accidentally, with a ball. I shudder at this moment with the tremendous sensation of seeing it done, and feeling that the ball has bounded on to Mr. Creakle's sacred head.

Poor Traddles! In a tight sky-blue suit that made his arms and legs like German sausages, or roly-poly puddings, he was the merriest and most miserable of all the boys. He was always being caned—I think he was caned every day that half-year, except one holiday Monday when he was only ruler'd on both hands—and was always going to write to his uncle about it, and never did. After laying his head on the desk for a little while, he would cheer up, somehow, begin to laugh again, and draw skeletons all over his slate, before his eyes were dry. I used at first to wonder what comfort Traddles found in drawing skeletons; and for some time looked upon him as a sort of hermit, who reminded himself by those symbols of mortality that caning couldn't last for ever. But I believe he only did it because they were easy, and didn't want any features.

He was very honorable, Traddles was; and held it as a solemn duty in

CHAPTER VII.

MY "FIRST HALF" AT SALEM HOUSE.

SCHOOL began in earnest next day. A profound impression was made upon me, I remember, by the roar of voices in the schoolroom suddenly becoming hushed as death when Mr. Creakle entered after breakfast, and stood in the doorway looking round upon us like a giant in a story-book surveying his captives.

Tungay stood at Mr. Creakle's elbow. He had no occasion, I thought, to cry out "Silence!" so ferociously, for the boys were all struck speechless and motionless.

Mr. Creakle was seen to speak, and Tungay was heard, to this effect.

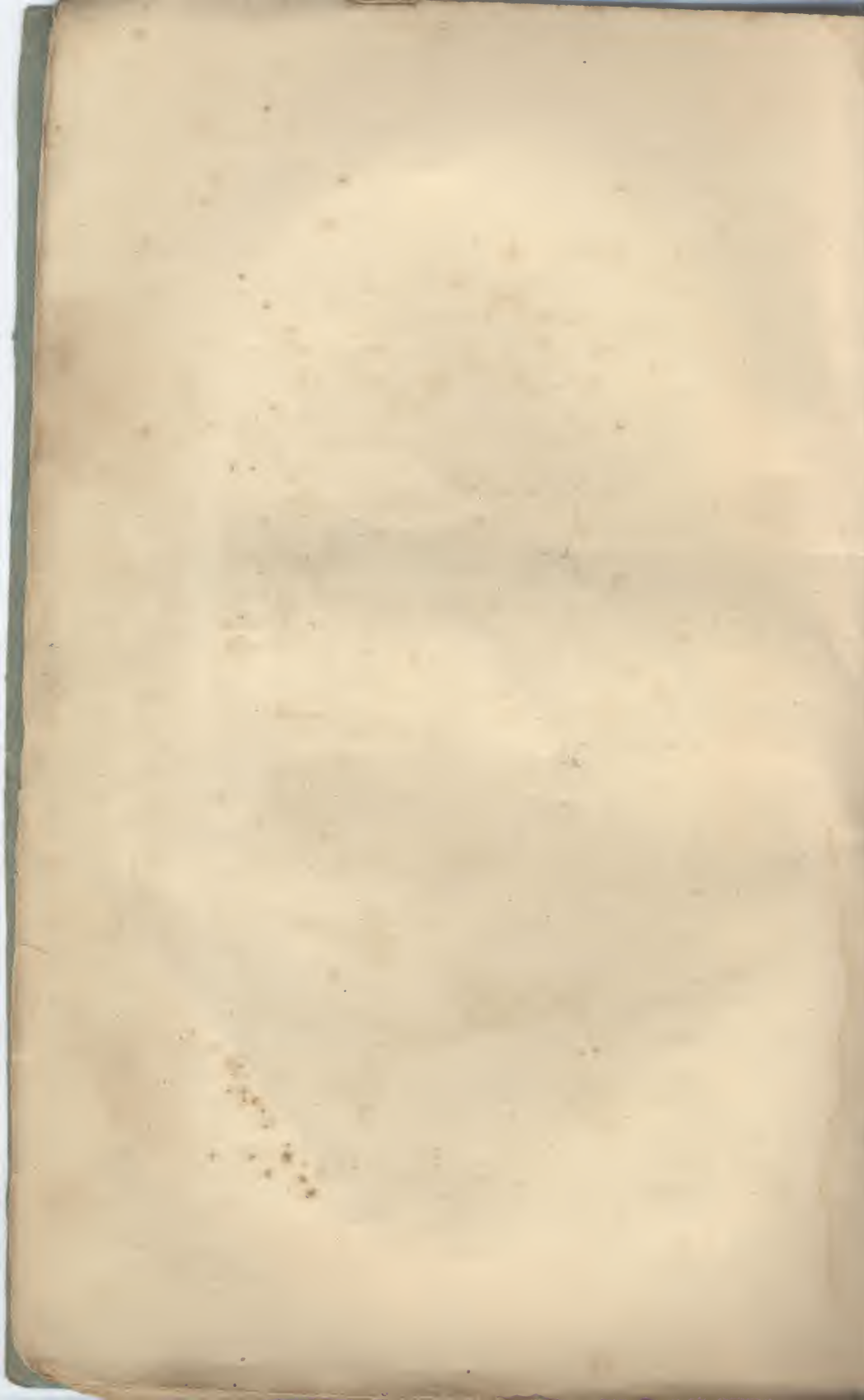
"Now, boys, this is a new half. Take care what you're about, in this new half. Come fresh up to the lessons, I advise you, for I come fresh up to the punishment. I won't flinch. It will be of no use your rubbing yourselves; you won't rub the marks out that I shall give you. Now get to work, every boy!"

When this dreadful exordium was over, and Tungay had stumped out again, Mr. Creakle came to where I sat, and told me that if I were famous for biting, he was famous for biting, too. He then showed me the cane, and asked me what I thought of *that*, for a tooth? Was it a sharp tooth, hey? Was it a double tooth, hey? Had it a deep prong, hey? Did it bite, hey? Did it bite? At every question he gave me a fleshy cut with it that made me writhe; so I was very soon made free of Salem House (as Steerforth said), and very soon in tears also.

Not that I mean to say these were special marks of distinction, which only I received. On the contrary, a large majority of the boys (especially the smaller ones) were visited with similar instances of notice, as Mr. Creakle made the round of the schoolroom. Half the establishment was writhing and crying, before the day's work began; and how much of it had writhed and cried before the day's work was over, I am really afraid to recollect, lest I should seem to exaggerate.

I should think there never can have been a man who enjoyed his profession more than Mr. Creakle did. He had a delight in cutting at the boys, which was like the satisfaction of a craving appetite. I am confident that he couldn't resist a chubby boy, especially; that there was a fascination in such a subject, which made him restless in his mind, until he had scored and marked him for the day. I was chubby myself, and ought to know. I am sure when I think of the fellow now, my blood rises against him with the disinterested indignation I should feel if I could have known all about him without having ever been in his power; but it rises hotly, because I know him to have been an incapable brute, who had no more right to be possessed of the great trust he held, than to be Lord High Admiral, or Commander-in-chief: in either of which capacities, it is probable that he would have done infinitely less mischief.

Miserable little propitiators of a remorseless Idol, how abject we were

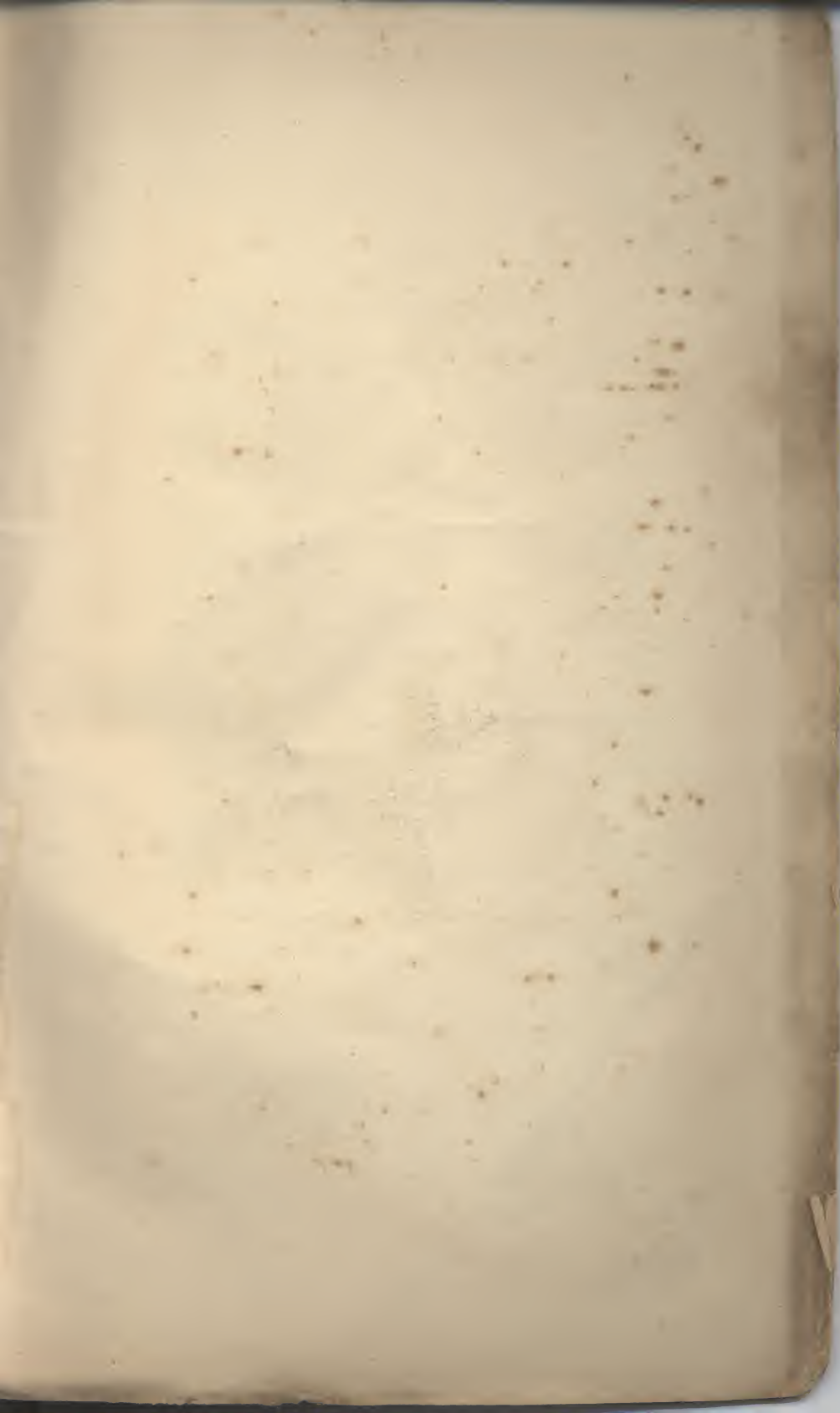




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Analysis by the celebrated Professor of Chemistry and Analytical Chemist, Andrew Ure, M.D., F.R.S., &c.

"London, 24, Bloomsbury-square, June 8, 1849."

"I hereby certify that having examined 'Du Barry's Revalenta Arabica,' I find it to be a pure vegetable Farina, perfectly wholesome, easily digestible, likely to promote a healthy action of the stomach and bowels and thereby to counteract dyspepsia, constipation, and their nervous consequences.

"ANDREW URE, M.D., F.R.S., &c., Analytical Chemist.

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CASES.

From the Right Hon. the Lord Stuart De Decies. "Dromana, Capouquin, County Waterford, Feb. 15, 1849.

"Gentlemen, I have derived much benefit from the use of the 'Revalenta Food.' It is only due to yourselves and to the public to state, that you are at liberty to make any use of this communication which you may think proper. I remain, gentlemen, your obedient servant,

"STUART DE DECIES."

"4, Park Walk, Little Chelsea, London, Oct. 2, 1848.

"Twenty-seven years' dyspepsia, from which I had suffered great pain and inconvenience, and for which I had consulted the advice of many, has been effectually removed by your excellent 'Revalenta Arabica Food' in six weeks' time, &c.

"PARKER D. BINGHAM, Captain, Royal Navy."

William Hunt, Esq., Barrister-at-law, King's College, Cambridge, has thanked us for the general benefit he has derived from our 'Revalenta Arabica Food.' At the age of eighty-three he obtained effectual relief from functional disorders of long standing, and overcame a recent attack of erysipelas, by confining his diet entirely to this excellent Food,—to the exclusion of all other remedies. We extract the following lines from one of his last letters:—

"I now consider myself a stranger to all complaints, excepting a hearty old age. I am as well as ever I was, and quite free from the vexatious and troublesome annoyance of an eruption of the skin, from which I had suffered for years, and which my medical attendant had declared incurable at my time of life."

"12, Patrick-street, Cork, 4th April, 1849.

"Respected Friends,—I have given your 'Arabica Food' to a girl of fifteen, who during the last seven years had not been a day without vomiting fifteen or sixteen times, and sometimes oftener. The fourth day after she commenced your Food, vomiting ceased altogether, and she has not thrown up since; her health is improving wonderfully, and I trust this will continue," &c. &c.

"WILLIAM MARTIN."

"Bromley, Middlesex, March 31st, 1849.

"Gentlemen,—The lady for whom I ordered your Food is six months advanced in pregnancy, and was suffering severely from indigestion, constipation, throwing up her meals shortly after eating them, having a great deal of heartburn, and being constantly obliged to resort to physic or the enema, and sometimes both. I am happy to inform you that your Food produced immediate relief. She has never been sick since, had but little heartburn, and the functions are more regular," &c. &c.

"THOS. WOODHOUSE."

"Bromley, Middlesex, 11th June, 1849.

"Dear Sirs,—I am very happy to have to inform you, that on Tuesday last the lady mentioned in my previous letter was safely delivered of a son; and you will no doubt be glad to learn, that they are both doing exceedingly well. She has had a much better 'time' than formerly, and the child is very strong and healthy. Not satisfied with any thanks that I can give you, she begs I will express to you her gratitude for this favourable change, which she entirely attributes to the 'Revalenta,' and to following strictly the advice which you have been so very kind as to give her from time to time.—I am, gentlemen, very truly yours,

"THOMAS WOODHOUSE."

"3, Sidney Terrace, Reading, Berks., Dec. 3, 1847.

"Gentlemen,—I am happy to be able to inform you that the person for whom the former quantity was procured has derived very great benefit from its use; distressing symptoms of long standing have been removed, and a feeling of restored health induced. "JAMES SHORLAND, late Surgeon, 96th Regiment."

"21, Broad Street, Golden Square, London, Nov. 20, 1847.

(Details of nineteen years' dyspepsia, nervousness, sickness at the stomach, with spasms and vomiting, and liver complaint, and three weeks' Revalenta treatment.)—"I humbly and sincerely thank God, and yourselves, as His instruments, &c.

"ISABELLA GRELLIERE,"

"Athol-street, Perth, May 2, 1848.

"Some time has now elapsed since the lady (who had been an invalid for thirteen years from want of digestion, accompanied with cough and general prostration of strength) for whom I procured your 'Arabica' Food, has been using it daily as directed, and I am happy to say that it has produced a most salutary change in her system, &c.

"JAMES PORTER."

"Haddington, East Lothian, March, 3, 1849.

"Dear Sir,—Your excellent 'Arabica Food' has completely restored my stomach, nerves, and liver, which had been disordered for nearly twenty years past, and my health is now everything I could wish, and has been so these three months past, &c.

"ANDREW FRASER."

"2, Princess-street, Manchester, 3rd Month, 19th, 1849.

"Respected Friend,—..... I think no one who had received or seen so much good and comfort result from it as in my mother's case, would be without it in sickness. Thou art at liberty to use this letter as thou thinkest best, and I will cheerfully answer any inquiries.

"I am, thy friend,

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Round the head in the manner of a fillet, leaving the Ears loose	1 to 1.		
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Richmond County, Cape Breton, March 12, 1849.

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DEAR SIR,—The extraordinary cures which have been reported to me by several persons who laboured under a variety of complaints, now convalescent through the benefits derived from the Pills sold by your agents in this district, known as Morison's Pills, deserve the widest publicity, and I should be wanting in common gratitude to the discoverer of this valuable medicine, did I for one moment hesitate to advance my opinion that its effects have saved many from a premature grave, particularly in this portion of Cape Breton. Being a sceptic for years as to the wonderful cures which I read and heard of, and I must confess too prone to ridicule the Pills as the production of quackery, I think it but fair to acknowledge my error, and manly on my part to offer this apology to you as the agent for that incomparable medicine. I deeply regret that of late a scarcity of the Pills is felt in the south-eastern section of this island, owing, I understand, to the treatment you have received from those agents whom you trusted, and who have, to a large amount, been defaulters. I am requested by a large and influential body of people, personally known to me, to request you will not visit the sins of a few on a grateful population, by keeping back your usual supply, and that you will appoint Mr. Morris Kavanah, of Saint Peter's in this county, your future agent, in whose well-known character and influence the greatest confidence may be placed. Perhaps I may be thought presumptuous in taking this liberty with you, but I have been requested to do so; indeed, I was solicited to open a communication direct with the proprietors, but my other avocations are fully more than I can well attend to, and have thus expressed to you the wishes of a very large portion of this island's population—say at least ten thousand persons—leaving to your own judgment the course best to pursue. I am in possession of numerous vouchers as to cures performed by the Pills, but really my time will not permit me to forward them to you, and our rate of postage is too high to send them in their present bulky form.

I have the honour to remain, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

N. H. MARTIN,

Justice of the Peace and Notary Public.

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